

# THE ESSEX CHAMPION:

## OR, The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay, and his Squire Ricardo.

Chapter I. The History of Sir Billy of Billerecay: His Birth, Education, and Education in various Kingdoms.

1. Sir Billy and his Squire were for the first Affected with the Esquimaux with a severe cold, and how it proved a Guide to the Danish King.

2. Sir Billy withstood his Enemies and is made Knight by the King of the Collier, his ill Intents in running at the Colours: with other things which happened.

3. Sir Billy being desired Knight, afterwards with his private Acquaintance, his Enemies with Danish Counsel, all conspiring in a wicked Intention, kill him, and then attempt to kill Sir Ricardo.

4. Sir Ricardo is put with a Chain in Prison, and how Sir Billy comes to his rescue, and how the King of the Collier is punished for his Treachery, and how Sir Ricardo is freed.

5. Sir Ricardo is the Father of the Famous Knight Sir Ricardo of the Red Palm, who goes to the Holy Land, and how he is taken and a Slave.

6. How Ricardo suffered himself to John Grammont, another Danish Knight, and how he was rescued by Ricardo's invisible Ring.

7. How Ricardo delivered his message to his Master, and of the Challenge made by Sir Billy against all Comers, in Honour of his Mistress Dalena.

8. How Sir Billy was forced to run from the Challenge: How Ricardo had at a wedding, where he was served as the Favourite, and how he won the heart of his Mistress.

9. Sir Billy's encounter with a Dragon in the Desert, how he was carried before a Tribunal of the Fates, and is freed by Ricardo by the help of his invisible Ring.

10. Ricardo going to visit his Master's Tomb, and how he meets a very strange Adventure in an Inn, with other things which happened.

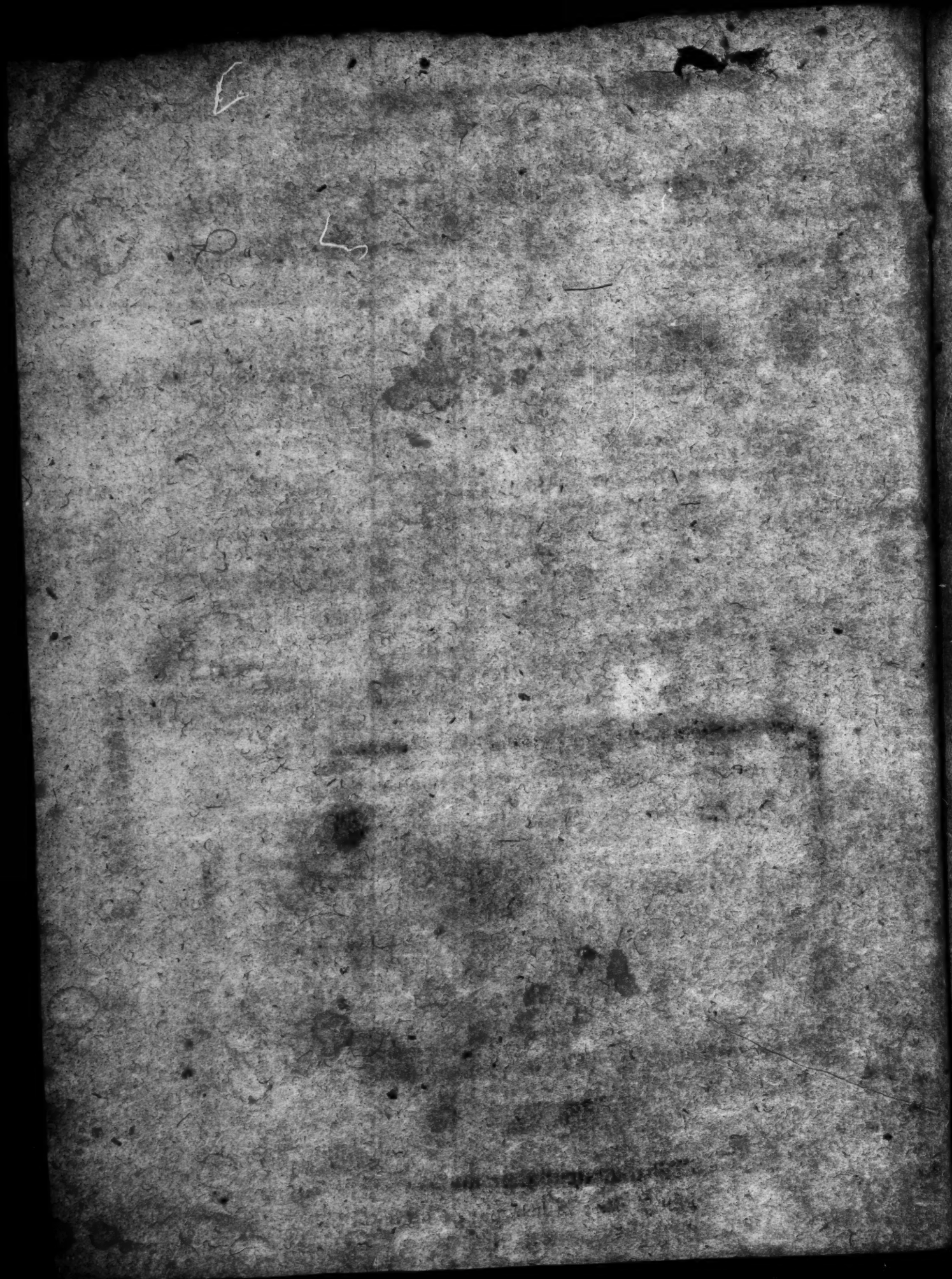
11. Sir Billy's Adventure in the wilderness, and how he is rescued by Ricardo, and how he is made a Knight.

12. How Ricardo was taken by the Danish King, and how he was freed by Ricardo's invisible Ring.

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Printed by T. Bland, at the 'Griffin' in St. Paul's Church-yard, London: 1744.





# The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay, and his Squire Ricardo.

## CHAP. I.

*The Birth of Sir Billy of Billerecay: His bringing up at School: And Resolution to pursue Knightly Advantages.*

**I**N the East part of *England*, as in respect of the Metropolis thereof *London*, in that Country formerly inhabited by the *Trinobantes*, afterwards possessed by the *East-Saxons*, from whom it derived to *East-sex*, since by Corruption, or rather for the more easier Pronunciation *Essex*: In a Town thereof called *Billerecay*, not many years ago, there lived a Farmer named *Thomasio*, one whose Means, as they were too low to make him envied, so were they too high to cause Scorn, enjoying a Mediocrity betwixt Riches and Poverty, that as he was no Gentleman to live on his Lands, yet adding Industry to his small Stock, he had most commonly Money in his Pocket, when others who made a braver show were without. In his younger Years he married the Sexton of *Bursted's* Daughter, a Man of such Strength, that according to the Records of that place, he would Thresh as much Wheat in one day, as another Man could do in two; and which is further remembered of him, that at a Match of Foot-ball, plaid betwixt that Village and the neighbouring Hamlet, by his alone Manhood and Prowess the Victory was clearly obtain'd of his side. We are the willingest to mention these things, because the Reader may understand, that the Person of whom we intend to treat of, was descended from courageous adventurous Persons.

Now four times had *Hiem's* Frosts bereav'd the Earth of her Summers Livery, and as many times had Lady *Flora* bestowed on *Tethus* a Suit of curious embroidered Tapistry, since the Nuptials were celebrated betwixt *Thomasio* and his loving Consort; during which time he had, by his Industry, much increased that little Stock he began with; nothing now so much perplex'd him, as the want of an Heir, on whom to bestow this parcel of Estate, if Death should Summon him to his Grave: At last, to his exceeding Joy, his Wife prov'd to be with Child, and in process of time was deliver'd of a goodly Boy, who was Christen'd by the Name of *William*. This Child, as he was long in coming, so was he the more welcome unto them, and so much the rather, because that *Lucy* (so was his Wife named) was now so stricken in Years, that he had little hopes of having another; wherefore he resolv'd to bestow some Cost on the bringing up of his Son *Billy*, his ambitious Thoughts soared so high, that he swore by his Plow-share if his Son lived, he would make him a Schollard, not only to write and read ordinarily, but if need were to make a Bill or a Bond, and to write a Letter, that he might not be beholding to the Vicar of the Parish upon every occasion: Accordingly, no sooner had his Son come to some Maturity of Knowledge, but he bought him a Horn-book, and put him to School to an Old Woman that lived in an Alms-house, who so indoctrinated him, that in a short time he had learned the *Cris-cross-row*, which made *Thomasio* think his Penny a Week well be-

4 *The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay,*

stow'd on him, so that he told his Son, If he proved a good Boy, when he had learn'd his Horn-book, he would buy him a Golden Primmer; nay, that he should likewise have a Plum-cake into the bargain; which so encourag'd young Billy, that in a short time he claimed his Father's Promise, for he was now in the last line of that Folio book. Whereupon *Thomas* going to the Market, after diligent enquiry for such a Volume, he at last did light on one according to his hearts desire, on the cover whereof was pictur'd St. George a conquering the Dragon, the sight whereof did no doubt implant in young Billy's Heart the Seeds of Valour and Heroick Thoughts, and prognosticated to the World what a Champion this would prove, whose valorous Acts should afterwards be proclaim'd by Fames golden Trumpet, and fill each corner of the habitable Earth with the Report of his deserved Praises.

Billy now plyed his Book with might and main, having gotten to the end of the same, before others who began with him had attained half way; and now to encourage him the more, his Father bought him several Ballads, as of *Fair Rosamond*, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, *King Edward the Fourth and the Tanner*, &c. but amongst them all, none of them pleased Billy so well, as the Song of that Arch Pyrate Sir *Andrew Barton*, and that Heroick Poem of *Sherry-Chase*, of which last the worthy Sir *Philip Sidney* used to say, That the hearing thereof (though Sung no better than by a Country Crowd) stirred up his Heart more than a Trumpet; well therefore might it be a great Motive to Billy to undertake such high Adventures, as afterwards (God willing) we shall declare unto you.

And now Billy will be no longer under the Tuition of a Dame, as knowing by natural Instinct, that a Womans Domination is most Imperious; wherefore his Father provides him a School-master, one *Snip* a Taylor, who for his Dexterity in Singing, was advanced to the Dignity of Church-Clerk of the Parish; which Office, and keeping of a School, found him with Powder'd-Beef, and the Vales of his Trade furnished him with Cabbage. Two Years went Billy to School with this Master, in which space of time he had learn'd to read so well, as gave his Father extraordinary content, so that now he buys Billy a choice Library of Books, viz. *The History of Tom Thumb*, *Robin Good-fellow*, *The Fryer and the Boy*, *The Three Merry Wives of Green-Goose-Fair*, *The Sack full of News*, *A Hundred Merry Tales*, &c. And now he thinks his Son sufficiently provided for Learning as concerning the Reading part, his next care is, to learn him to Write and cast Account, and then he fears not but he may live in any place in *England*; yea, and if that the Stars should be propitious to him, he might in time be advanced to a Justice of the Peace his Clerk: Therefore seeing that *Snip* could not write, he intreated the Vicar of the Parish to take some pains with his Son, and if he made Billy as cunning at his Pen, as he himself was at his Plough, he promised him to Fallow his Glebe Land for him for nothing: Upon these Considerations the Vicar took Billy under his Tuition, but advis'd *Thomas*, that whilst his Son learned to write, that he might not in the mean time forget his Reading, to buy him some pretty Books to read in, which might draw him thereto with some delight. *Thomas* replied, He had been at great Charges that way already, but for his Sons good, he would not  
tick



stick out for a small matter. So the next Fair, taking his Son along with him for the choice of his Volumes, at a Pedlars Stall he bought him these Books following:

*The Garland of Good Will.*  
*The Garland of Princely Delights.*  
*Pasquill's Feasts.*  
*Scoggin.*  
*Long Meg of Westminster.*  
*Doctor Faustus.*  
*Fryer Bacon.*  
*The Seven Wise Masters.*  
*The Gentle-Craft.*  
*Jack of Newberry.*  
*Reynard the Fox.*  
*Diogenes.*  
*History of Fortunatus.*  
*George a Green.*  
*Bevis of Southampten.*  
*Guy of Warwick.*  
*Palmerin of England.*  
*Huon of Bourdeaux.*  
*Valentine and Orson.*

*Don Beliavis of Greece.*  
*Parisinus and Parisimenes.*  
*The Seven Champions of Christendom.*  
*Destruction of Troy.*  
*History of King Arthur.*  
*Amadis de Gaule.*  
*Tom a Lincoln, the Red Rose Knight.*  
*Pheander the Maiden Knight.*  
*The Knight of the Sun.*  
*The Mirror of Knighthood.*  
*Hero and Leander.*  
*Children in the Wood.*  
*Tom Stitch the Tayler.*  
*Knight of the Burning Sword.*  
*Argalus and Parthenia.*  
*King and the Cöbler.*  
*Nine penniworth of Wit for a Penny.*  
*The Man of Kent.*

Billy was not a little brag of his Books, for he imagined he had now as good a Library as the best Scholar in Christendom; but nothing tickled his Fancy so much in the reading of them, as those Romantick Stories of killing Gyants and Dragons, which many times did so far transport him, that he thought himself to be really engaged in these imaginary Fights; and so intent were his Thoughts upon them, that Death's image sleep could not divert him; so that when *Morpheus*, with his leaden Mair, had knock'd down others asleep in their Beds, the Thoughts of these strange Adventures did so run in his Head, that he would rise in his sleep, and getting a Bed-staff in his hand, lay about him as if he were mad, imagining he had encountred with some Gyant, or other strange Monster. The Servants that lay in the same Room with him, being disturbed thus with his Fegaries, complained to their Master, who thereupon chid his Son, telling him, That People which laboured hard, must not be disturb'd of their natural Rest, for by that means they could not perform their work. And therefore he threatned him, If he plaid any more such Pranks, he would not only put him to Plow, but also take all his Books from him; for he imagined it was his Books that wrought that Indisposition in him. Yet notwithstanding all his Threatnings, Billy's mind did so run of his Knightly Atchievements, that he still continued in his old course, for one night dreaming he was encountering with a terrible Dragon, he got up in his sleep, and taking the Bed-staff in his hand, began to lay about him according to his old manner. Now it so chanced, that thorough often redoubling his blows, he at last struck the Plow-man such a blow on the Pate, that the Blood trickled down his Ears. The Plow-man being betwixt sleeping and waking, feeling the smart of the blow, started out

out of his Bed, and taking a Plow whip in his hand, which stood up there ready in a corner, he began to exercise the same on *Billy's* body, laying it on so soundly, that had *Billy* been in such a sleep as *St. David* the Champion of *Wales* was, in the enchanted Garden of *Ormondine*, yet must the smart thereof needs have waked him; but *Billy* took all patiently, imagining it to be the blows of the Dragon's Tail; having read that Knights Errant are subject to such Adventures. And now the Plow-man being weary of belabouring him, went to Bed; *Billy* also return'd to his Cabbin, but the smart of his blows were such, as would not suffer him to sleep one wink all that night; enough to have spoil'd a young Knight Errant, had not his mind been so fully fixed on Knightly Adventures.

Next Morning *Billy* was so soar that he could not go to School, and being ask'd how he came to be so, he told them, *It was with encountering of a mighty Dragon, whilst he attempted to rescue a King's Daughter that was bound to a Stake*: And so run on in a wild Discourse, what a terrible Duel he had with him, according as he had read in the seven Champions, of the Combat there betwixt *St. George* and the Dragon. But his Father understanding, by his Plow-man's broken Pate, what Whimfies still possessed his Son's Noddle, repented him that ever he had put him to School, and accursed the time that ever he bought him these Books, the original cause, as he imagined, of *Billy's* Distemper; and so in a Rage, getting all his Books together, the Knights and the Gyants had been all burnt in one Bon-fire, had not *Billy* with Tears, and his Wife *Lucy* with Intreaties, rescu'd them out his hands.

And now *Billy*, instead of going to School, is put to keep Sheep, which he liked far better than going to Plow, because he had read of some Kings and famous Knights that had been Shepherds, but in all his Romances (by which he was solely directed) he had never read of any one of them that ever held Plow. In this lazy kind of Life he had leisure more than enough to peruse his Romances over a-fresh, in which he neglected no time; so that he could give a perfect account of each particular in any of these books. And now weighing with himself what immortal Fame those Knights had gained, he resolved to become a Knight Errant himself, being now (as he thought) of strength and Age sufficient enough to cope with any Gyant, yea, though he were as big as *Sir Ascapart* is described in *Bevis of Southampton*, or *Colbrand* the Dane, whom *Guy of Warwick* slew.

But considering with himself, that a Knight without a Lady is like Ling without Mustard, or a Bag-pudding without Suet, he therefore began to think on what Female he should place his Affection, at last he resolved on a lusty strapping Wench, a neighbouring Farmer's Daughter, one who for her height might have been Second to *Long Meg* of *Westminster*, and as small in the Waste as a Mill-post in the middle, such a one as the conceited Fellow could by no means be perswaded to marry, alledging, That of Evils the least is still to be chosen; but Fancy that Loves without shewing reason why, presented her to *Billy* as the Phenix of the Age, and therefore he resolved that she, and none but she, should be the Load-stone of his Affections. But her Name being *Joan Grumball*, he thought was too mean for her, now that she was to act her part on the Theatre of Honour; he therefore took the same liberty as Cardinals do when they are elected Pope, to change their Name, and resolved in his thoughts, that henceforward she should be called *The Fair Dulcina*; and now his thoughts are wholly fixed on Love, where-



and his Squire Ricardo.

wherefore in imitation of those Amourists he had read of in his Romances, he frequents Solitary places, wrings his hands, and exclaims bitterly on Cupid for bringing him into that miserable Thralldom. O impetuous Love (said he) with what heavy burdens dost thou load thy poor Vassals? How hard are thy Dilates, and how intricate the Meanders thou bringest thy Captives into? O pierce the Heart of that cruel fair One, that she may at last consider of the Miseries that I endure for her sake; but thou art Deaf as well as Blind, and will not, or rather canst not hear: For how can we imagine thee to be a God, who art so unjust in all thy Actions, to fire the Breast of one, and freeze the other; to make her Heart more obdurate and harder than the Adamant, and mine like Wax, fit to receive any Impression thou art pleased to put upon it. O Dulcinea, the only Joy of my Heart, assure thy self that no Mortal Man whatsoever, is, or can be, so much thy Servant and Slave as my self. Then concluding with a Sigh for its period, he would again wring his hands, throw himself upon the Ground, and make such sad Faces, that had Dulcinea seen him, she could not chuse but have melted into Compassion, even as a pound of Butter doth melt with the heat of the Fire.

But as this Passion of Love maketh some wise Men mad, so doth it again quicken and revive the Wits of others, making their Fancies soar in a higher pitch than ordinary, as may appear by this our Billy, who though of himself as dull a Clod of Earth as ever Prometheus put fire into, yet being thus wrap'd up in Love, as a Baby in Blankets, he grew very Poetical, and taking Pen and Paper in hand, writ these lines following in praise of his Dulcinea.

Most sweet Dulcinea, whose Beauty doth surpass  
Our common Beauties, as the Flowers doth Grass;  
Or as pale Cynthia in a Winters night,  
Surpasses all the Stars that shine so bright:  
Or as the Pewter Spoon scoured (so good)  
Doth far excel those Spoons are made of Wood:  
Or as rich Diamonds far exceeds coarse Pearls,  
So doth Dulcinea all our Country Girls.

Or as a Cedar which doth stately grow,  
Doth far excel those shrubs that are below;  
Or as a Parmain doth exceed a Crab,  
Or as an honest Woman doth a Drab:  
Or as a Sun-shine day excels a foul,  
Or as a Nightingale exceeds an Owl:  
Or as sweet Cream doth Butter-milk excel,  
So doth Dulcinea bear away the Bell.

As Christmas Pye more high esteem doth bear,  
Than Pyes are made at other times o'th Year:  
Or as a Damask Rose excels a Nettle,  
Or as fine Gold exceeds all other Mettle;

*The Famous History of Billy of Billerecay,*

*Or as a Silver Thimble doth surpass  
Twenty of those same Thimbles made of Brass,  
So doth my sweet Dulcinea so lovely brown,  
Excel the chiefest Lasses in our Town.*

Billy was not a little proud of his Verses, for he conceited himself to be near as good a Poet as a Knight Errant, and yet he thought withal, that he could not well be the one without being the other, they being two as inseparable Companions as a Whore and the Pox. And now having proceeded thus far in his business, his next Care was, how to get a Squire, for a Knight Errant without a Squire, is like powder'd Beef without Mustard: He therefore consider'd with himself, he must of necessity be furnished that way, not only to have a Companion in his Travels, but also to be a witness of his Valour, and upon occasion to lend on an Errand to the Lady of his Affections, according as he had read that Knights-Errant formerly had done. Much were his Thoughts perplexed in the choice of a fit Person for this purpose, sometimes pitching upon one, and then upon more serious Thoughts, rejecting him and fixing on another, being more curious in his Choice, than many a Man is in chusing of his Wife: At last he resolved upon one that was his Father's Taskers Son, and getting him one day to help him Fold his Sheep, he there imparted his mind to him, telling him such Rhodomantado Stories of Conquering Kingdoms and Islands, and Captivating Gyants and Monsters; and how after all these Victories, that he himself should be Crowned King of some great Country, when he would make him a petty King or Vice-Roy under him; that the young Man was easily induced to condescend unto his Motion. So agreeing to be as secret in the business as they could, that their Fathers might not come to have any knowledge thereof, for spoiling their Preferment. Having Folded their Sheep, they departed home, intending to put their Resolutions into action as soon as might be.

C H A P. 2.

*How Sir Billy and his Squire went forth to seek Adventures; Their Encounter with a Scare-crow, and how he came to a Castle to be Dubbed Knight.*

**N**OW were Billy and his Squire very busie in providing Materials for their intended Journey, when their Design had like to have been quite spoiled by an unexpected Accident, which came to pass as followeth.

Billy, according to his wonted course, frequenting Solitary places, and bitterly exclaiming against the Tyrannies of Cupid, was one day over-heard by a neighbouring Farmer, who searching for some stray'd Sheep, was by that means brought into that uncouth place, where he heard Billy to make this sad Relation.

O Dulcinea, the Joy of my Heart! How doth the Remembrance of thee add new Life to my drooping Spirits? O sooner shall the Sea cease to Ebb and Flow, or Hyperion to run his daily course, than I shall cease to be Faithful to thee! What though Jason was False to Medea, and Paris to Oenone! Yet never shall it be said that thy Knight did prove disloyal, that Billy was false to his Dulcinea. No; know I will be as true to thee, as St. George was to his Sabra, Guy of Warwick to his Fair Phelice, or Bevis of Southampton to Josiana. O how I long to make thy Name renowned by the

*Dee's*



Deeds of arms which I shall perform, that Babes unborn in time to come may read in Books, those valiant Acts which I shall do for thy sake! O how many Thousand Pagans shall I destroy, and set their Cities on flames of Fire, like the Battlements of Troy, and make their blood run down the Channels, and all for the love of my Dulcinea! But thou alas regardest not my Love, but art as deaf to my complaints, as the hard-hearted Creditor is to his poor Debtor. O Dulcinea! Dulcinea! the fairest Wench that ever trod upon Shoe of Leather, regard my moan, and pity the sad pains that I endure for thy sake. O be as kind to me as Rosalinde was to St. Denys the French Champion, or the fair Jew to St. James the Champion of Spain. Then taking the verses out of his pocket, which he had made in the praise of his Dulcinea, he repeated them with such a groan, as if she had been the only Goddess in the World worthy to be ador'd. The Farmer who stood all this while unseen to mark his discourse, hearing him talk of Gyants and Champions and Streams of Blood, was struck into a marvellous amazement; but at last hearing him to repeat the Verses, he conceited with himself that he was infected with an itch of poetry, which he judged to be far worse than the Plague; and therefore went and told Thomasio, that his Son was turn'd a Poet, but that he might as good almost see him hang'd, for he would never be worth a Groat as long as he lived. Now by my Dun-Cow (said Thomasio) I pray thee Neighbour tell me what these Poets be? in Vaish (saith the Farmer,) they are a strange kind of People, who if they get a Shilling in their Pocket (for they seldom can reach above such a Sum) they never leave till they have spent ten Pence out of it. They are very dry Fellows, for they can never quench their thirst with drinking: And though by reason of their Poverty few English Women will have them, yet they say they are wedded to nine Outlandish wenches whom they call Muses. They talk of a great deal of land they have lies in a place called Parnassus-hill, but by my say I believe it is but barren stuff, for never an Usurer will lend a farthing on mortgage on it, else sure it had been all forfeited long ago. Sometimes perhaps a Gentleman will lend a half Crown or Five Shillings upon it, but no sooner is that Money spent, but they will Mortgage it to another, which makes me wonder how these Gentlemen are cheated, because they show them Writings; But I'll warrant ye they never get a Penny of a Lawyer, for they are too cunning to be cheated with such Noninoes; And yet ne're stir, sometimes they make such Plurvy Songs, that when they are Sung in our Market, they make the Maids to melt like the butter in their basket to hear them: but as sure as Eggs with too long Boiling will prove to be hard, they have but little or nothing for the making of them, for a new Suit on their Backs is as strange as to meet with Frosty weather at Midsummer: So that if you would never so fain be revenged on them, their Coats are so thin, they will not endure a brushing: nor is it to any purpose to Sue them at Law, for they are indebted Twenty Shillings more than they are worth at the Ale-House. By my Hallidant (said Thomasio) if I thought my Son Billy would prove such a Poet, I should heartily wish he had never been Born; but now I think on't, I have a trick in my head that I believe will Spoil his Rimeing, I will take him away from keeping of Sheep, and set him to Threshing, and Forcing him to work hard from Morning till Night, I warrant you he will have but little Mind of making of Verses. Indeed (said his Neighbour,) you have hit the Nail on the head, for I tell ye, this Poetry proceeds all from Idleness, for I that was brought up hard to work, did never make a Verse in all my Life; But I wonder why at first you would bestow so much learn-

The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay,

ing on him, for though a little be not amiss, to read now and then a Chapter to drive away the time, yet you will find, that if once they go any further, the more Bookish the more Blockish: for then go about to learn them how to hold Plough, and as good go about to empty our Horse-Pond with a spoon. Therefore I advise ye Neighbour to do as you say, and you will soon see that working hard will put him quite besides his Poetry.

Accordingly the next morning Billy was set to Threshing, and so narrowly looked to for plying his Work, that he had no breathing time for his Love Sick Fancies, and quite took off the edge of his Stomack for Versifying: his whole care and study being now how to get himself rid of this thralldom, that he might go in pursuit of his Knightly adventures, and Fortune, that ever favours noble Enterprizes, soon put a golden opportunity into his hand, for his Father was to go to London to pay his Rent, which with some other business that he had would detain him there the space of three days. Billy resolving to let no more time slip, now that Fortune was so favourable to him, acquaints his Squire Ricardo therewith, bidding him to provide his things ready, for Fame called aloud unto them to hasten, and injur'd Ladys and wronged Captives cryed for help from his victorious arm; wherefore as soon as his Father was set out on his Journey, they began to prepare for theirs; and going first into the stable, they singled out two of the ablest Plough-Horses, whom Sir Billy, now that they were preferred to be Horses of Service, changed their names from *Brown* and *Bayard*, by which they were before called, unto the more stately names of *Belerophon* and *Pugnato*, chusing *Belerophon* to ride on himself, and bestowing *Pugnato* upon his Squire.

Their next care was for Armor for themselves, and that had the Queen of Chance provided ready for them to their hands, for *Thomasio* being Constable of the Parish, the Town Arms for the Trained Bands was laid up in his House, with which they armed themselves *Cap-a-pe*; but their chiefest care was in the choice of their Swords, not minding so much for the defence of themselves, as for weapons wherewith to offend their enemies: they therefore chose two *Bilbo* blades, hand broad, such as would cut off a Gyants head at one Blow; and now a new thought came into Billy's head, by what name to call his Sword, because it was proper for a Knight Errants Sword to have a Name; but after he had Scratched his head a little, it came into his Pate and so the Sword was icleped *Rosera*. Their Launces were two Pikes, cut in two by the middle; and for other weapons or accoutrements they rested contented, till such time their manhood could purchase them better. Ricardo was very importunate to carry a Wallet of Victuals along with them, but Sir Billy told him it was against the Law of Arms for Knights Errant to carry with them any Mony or Victuals, they being to be provided for at every Castle they came unto.

It was at that time of the year when these Champions set forth, that *Ceres* had Cloathed the earth with a rich Suit of all Sorts of grain, and that the full ears began to humble their flowry tops as in a graceful acknowledgment to thank the Husbandman for his painful Toyle. Now that they might not be seen, they set forth in the night time, when by the next morning at such time as *Aurora* had opened her purple Doors, and gave notice of the approach of *Titan*, they were gotten from Home the space of Twelve Miles, not minding whether they went, but



but only so that they went forwards. It happened that in their way was a field of standing Wheat, in which the owner had placed a great Scare-Crow upon a Pole to Frighten the Birds from eating his Corn; this being placed of a good height, and being of as terrible a shape as they could make it, Billy imagined to be a Gyant, and therefore with a loud voice thus spake unto it; *Thou Blanderon, Colebrand, Amarant, Ascapart, or what ever else thy name be, I Charge thee to come and humble thy self before the worthy Knight Errant Sir Billy of Billerecay, or look for what my Conquering Arm shall do unto thee.* But seeing the Scare-Crow returned him no answer, he in a furious mood set Spurs to his Horse, and with his Lance bare the Scare-Crow to the ground, which in its fall tumbling before his Horse, the Horse stumbling thereat, came over and over with Sir Billy. In the mean time the Farmer and his Son who owned this Corn chanced to come by, who seeing his Wheat thus Shamefully spoyled, far more than the Birds could have done hurt, taking up the quarrel of his Scare-Crow, he with a good Battoon laid upon the Ribs of Sir Billy, who was scarcely able to stand, being much bruised with the fall of his Horse. But Ricardo seeing his Master thus roughly handled, thought it was his Duty to take his part, and therefore with his piece of Pike, which he called a Lance, running with his Horse furiously at the Farmer, and missing of him, with the force which he used pushed himself clear over his Horses Head; The Farmers Son seeing them thus bent upon mischief, and (as he thought) more upon Spight to do them an injury, than any skill they had in doing it, having a good lily Ashen Towel in his hand, he fell a Rib-roasting of Ricardo, who feeling the blows smart, bellowed like a Town Bull; Sir Billy hearing this loud outcry of his Squire, although he were soundly paid off himself, yet called to Ricardo, and told him, *it was against the Law of Arms to ask his Enemy Mercy. What tell you me of Arms (said Ricardo) when he hath so beaten me, that I believe I shall never be able again to lift my Arms up to my Head.* The Farmer and his Son, upon these words, stayed their hands, demanding them the reason why they had without any cause given, so trampled upon and spoyled their Corn? Tell me (said Sir Billy) *what Gyant was that I overcame, and by what spells and Negromantick Charms you have caused me and my Squire to undergo these blows we have felt? which if you refuse to do, I swear by the River of Styx, and by the Honour of all Knight Errants that ever were yet in the World, I will make you such an example to posterity, that Babes unborn, in recounting the miseries of unfortunate People, shall use your names for a Memorial.*

The Farmer and his Son by his Discourse judged him to be Frantick, and therefore expecting no other Satisfaction for their Corn, but what they shall have by beating them, began a-fresh to Baskinado them, so that Ricardo cried out, *Murther, Murther;* But Sir Billy thinking it all to be done by Inchantment, took it very Patiently. At length the old man having more compassion than his Son, desisted from striking, and Ricardo seeing a little breathing space, got away as fast as he could, leaving his Master to shift for himself, who also getting up his Horse as well as his battered Body was able, and muttering terrible imprecations against Negromancers and Inchanters, he rode after Ricardo, whom he much blamed for deserting him in such an Honourable encounter. *I cannot tell* (said

18 *The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay.*  
(said Ricardo) but I think in such Encounters there is more Blows than Honour to be gotten, and therefore my Council is, that we return home again, and leave this work of killing Gyants and Monsters, to those who have nothing else to do.

These words so angered Sir Billy, that in a great rage he said; O thou lump of Ignorance, canst thou imagine that Honour is to be gotten by lying in Bed? No; That is a thing which is to be attained by Difficulties and dangers. Didst not thou see how I made the Gyant to fall before my Victorious arm? What Gyant (said Ricardo) I saw nothing but only a Scare-Crow, and would to God it had stood there still although it had been the Strongest Gyant that ever was made to Scare away Birds. This (said Sir Billy) cometh by thy Ignorance in Books of Chevalry, I tell thee that which thou tookest for a Scare-Crow, was the tall and terrible Gyant Blanderon; but these things are done by Negromancy, and the reason why we suffered these Blows in this first encounter, was because I have not received the order of Knighthood, for in all Books of Chevalry whatsoever, we never do read that ever any Gyant did beat a Knight Errant, but that always the Knight did beat the Gyant: And therefore I am resolved, that at the first Castle I come to, I will request to be made a Knight by the Lord thereof; which is a thing that ought not to be denied to those who have sworn themselves true Sons of Mars, and spend their Blood in relieving distressed Ladies, and those that are oppressed.

Ricardo was very hard to be perswaded, (for it was then about the time when Mortals used to break their fasts, and his custom used to be rather to neglect his work than the satisfying of his Stomach.) Had not the great hopes of his Masters being suddenly Knighted, and the entertainment he should have at the next Castle, diverted him; And to see that fortune is sometimes Favourable to Knights Errant, they had not rid long before they came to a sumptuous building, where lived an ancient Esquire, who kept a very bountiful House, and courteously entertained strangers that came to him. Thither rid Sir Billy and his Squire, and meeting one of the Servants in the Yard, asked him if the Lord of the Castle was within? The Servant stared upon them, seeing them so Ridiculously habited, and seeing Sir Billy have on some pieces of Armor, which he had never seen before, but only such as hung up in his Masters Hall. I tell you (said he) this is no Castle, nor is my Master any Lord, save only that he is Lord of the Mannor. I perceive (said Sir Billy) that thou art ignorant of what belongeth to Knights Errant, and therefore go tell thy Master, that the most Heroick and invincible Knight, Sir Billy of Billerecay, would confer with him. Tell me then (quoth the Fellow) how long thou and the Springal that tenderth on thee, have been come out of Bedlam, and perhaps I may acquaint him with your being here, else may my Master be angry with me, for of all scents, he loveth not that which comes out of Bedlam. These words put Sir Billy in a great rage, drawing out his Morglay, and Brandishing it about his head, that he looked like the picture of St. George fighting with the Dragon. The Fellow seeing him draw out his Killing Iron, knowing it to be dangerous meddling with edge Tools, told him he would presently acquaint his Master; But Sir (said he) my memory is bad, and therefore I must intreat you once more to tell me your name. I tell thee (said Billy) It is the Victorious Knight Errant, Sir Billy of Billerecay. A killing name, and a killing look, (said the Fellow)



and his Squire Ricardo.

12

Fellow) I doubt my Master will be afraid, but yet for my own Safety I will adventure to tell him. So going into the House, he found him Discoursing with Gentlemen, to whom he said, Sir, there is without the Vincible Knight, Sir Billy of Billerecay, desires to confute with ye. The Gentleman laughing at his simplicity, looked out to see what great Don this same should be; But when they saw two such Anticks, clad in patches of Armour like Mars his perry-toes, they could not contain, but were ready to burst with laughter at such a ridiculous sight; And therefore expecting to find rare sport in their conversation, they went all forth to give him Entertainment, whom Sir Billy accosted in this manner.

SIR, I am one, who for the publick good have taken upon me the Exercise of Arms, for to revive the Honour of Knight Errantry, which too long hath lain neglected in the world, to the great prejudice of distressed Damosels, wronged Ladies, and Captived Knights; and how since the World hath been Pestered with Gyants, Monsters, and Inchanters, there is none can be ignorant, and which I and my Squire felt to our Cost but very lately; for Encountring with a terrible Gyant, notwithstanding I gave him a total overthrow, yet were we set upon by two wicked Negromancers, who by their cursed Magick Art gave us many terrible Blows, which we were not able to withstand, and as I conceive the Reason is, for that as yet I have not received the Order of Knighthood, my request therefore is, that since I have devoted myself to the publick good, I may be kindly entertained in this Castle, and that the Lord thereof will dub me Knight, according to the Rules of that Heroick Order of Knights Errant.

The good Old Squire hearing Sir Billy's oration, could not chuse but smile, and being one of a pleasant Disposition, he resolved to Sooth him up in his Fancy, thereby to make himself and the Gentlemen his Friends the better sport, therefore fixing his eyes on Sir Billy, with a grave Countenance thus spake to him

How highly your noble resolution is to be commended, I want words for to express, sure you imitate the Arts of the valiant Hercules, whose Labours were for the suppressing of Tyrants, and righting such persons as were wronged. Know then, Sir, you are very welcome to our Castle, and for the Order of Knight-Hood, we shall take such a course, that you shall not go without it, lest the World should be destitute of those many Successes which are destined to your Vistorious Arm.

These words were very pleasing to Sir Billy, but much more to Ricardo, who now was in good hopes of recruiting his wambling Belly, which wanted the usual mels of Porrege that he used to have for his Breakfast before he went to plough; therefore alighting off their Horses, and committing them to the care of one of the Servants, they walked in with the Gentlemen, and were by the Master of the House kindly entertained. But it would have made a Horse break his Bridle with laughter, to see how the young Knight Errant and his Squire were put to their shifts in getting off their Armor, which after some difficulty they accomplished, and were as soon Complemented by the Gentlemen there present. Sir Billy returned them the like Civilities, but with as many absurdities, as a Citizen at Court, or as a Clown at a Dancing-School.

After some little discourse, the Gentleman of the House invited Billy and his

G

Squire

*The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay,*

Squire to take a repast of Victuals provided for them, which was Courteously accepted by Sir Billy, but especially by Ricardo, whose barking Stomach cried aloud for a supply. The Gentlemen there present desired excuse to sit down with them, but with great Admiration beheld how the Knight and his Squire laid about them in this Teeth-Encounter; more Valiant, and far more Fortunate therein, than in the Encounter with the terrible Scare-Crow.

After they had sufficiently refreshed themselves, Sir Billy's Teeth now lying Idle, his Tongue having free liberty to speak, he began his Speech in this wife.

*There is no undertaking, whatsoever so Honourable and necessary to mankind as this of Knight Errantry; were it not for them, how would Gyants and Monsters overcome each Country, destroying all with Rapine and Violence; It is the Knights-Errant unconquered Arms that delivereth distressed Knights and Ladies from their Imprisonment in Incharmed Castles; who overcomes Magicians and Negromancers, putting an end to their Devilish Inchantments, but only the undaunted Prowess of Knights-Errant. Did you ever hear of any Dragons, Griffins, or Sagitaries, slain and destroyed, but by the invincible Valour and Matchless Magnanimity of Knights-Errant? In brief, they are the Avengers of Injuries, the Righters of Wrongs, the Supporters of the distressed, the Defenders of the Peaceable, and quellers of the riotous. The want of these Heroick Persons in this last Age, hath been the cause of so many Villanies that have been committed, none more able nor more willing to suppress outrages, than Knights-Errant; To this Honourable Function have I therefore devoted my self, beseeching you most Mighty Monarch of this Famous Castle, for the Commendation of my intended purposes, to bestow on me the Honour of Knight-hood, whereby I may be enabled to perform such feats of Arms, that Babes unborn may read with Wonder the Valiant Arts performed by me.*

The Courteous Old Gentleman hearing his Extravagancies, and willing to make some pastime with his folly, as also that his Friends might have some Jovial Divertisement, he freely granted him his request in these Words.

*Most noble Youth, in whom appears the early sparks of Martial Resolutions, who would seek to quench the Flames of Magnanimity which I see already enkindled in your Breast; that were to deprive posterity of the knowledge of your renowned Actions; therefore know your request is granted, you performing those Services which Knights-Errant are bound to do; Namely, this Night to watch your Arms, and manfully defend them against any one that should seek to oppose ye, thereby shewing your self worthy of the Honour to be conferred on ye, and the next day we shall Dub ye Knight accordingly.*

Sir Billy thanked him very heartily, undertaking the Charge, and performing it most Valiantly, as you shall hear in the next Chapter.

C H A P. 3.

*Sir Billy watcheth his Armor; and is made Knight by the Lord of the Castle: his ill success in running at the Quinten: with other things which happened.*

**N**OW had the Curle pated Waggoner of Heaven finish his Diurnal course, and driven his panting Steeds down to the Western Hill, and Nights black Wings had Maskt up the light in gloomy Darknes, when the renowned Champion



pion Sir *Billy* of *Billereay* having refreshed his Spirits with the sprightly Liquor of the spreading Vine, undertook according to those Presidents he had read in Books of *Chevalry*, to watch his Arms for that Night: accordingly they were seated in a very convenient place, where if any opposition should be offer'd unto him, he might have full liberty to bestir himself; the Gentleman wishing him to be very watchful, because the place he said was troubled with Devils and infernal Spirits; which yet notwithstanding nothing daunted Sir *Billy's* Courage, so much was his Heart fraught with invincible Valour, that he dreaded no Danger whatsoever.

Whilst *Billy* was thus fixt in watching his Armor; to try his Man-hood, the Master of the House, with the other Gentlemen, perswaded a Groom, a lusty Stout Fellow, to Encounter with him, promising, if he overcame him, a good reward for his Pains. The Fellow, willing to show the Gentlemen some sport, undertakes the same; but thinking it more pleasant to overcome without blows, he intends to do it by Stratagem; and to this purpose, there being a Bears skin in the House, he cloathed himself therewith, and putting a Vizard on his Face, and carrying on his shoulder a lighted Candle in the Rinde of a *Pompon*, cut out with the resemblance of Nose, Eyes, and Mouth, it looked most dreadfully, but least those should not take the wished Effect, he carried in his hand a good Ashen Towel to defend himself. Being thus Accoutred, in the dead of the Night, when darkness had clothed our Hemisphere, save only a faint light which *Cynthia* gave through the dusky Clouds, he Approaches to the place where Sir *Billy* stood with his drawn Sword to Encounter any that should oppose him. At the first sight thereof he was in some little Fear, as having never read in all his Books of Errantry, of such a fearfull Apparition; but his Earnest desire of being Dub'd a Knight, made him slight all danger; so that with his great two-handed Sword, he struck at the Groom with all his might; but Fortune herein was Favourable to him, for the blow lighting on the *Pompon* Lanthorn, broke it all in pieces, and in an instant extinguish'd the Light, which made *Billy* verily believe he had cut the Devils head off: Encouraged wherewith he so redoubled his blows, that the Fellow thought he would lend him to the Devil indeed, imagining the cracking of the *Pompon* had been the cracking of his Bones; wherefore giving him a fair pair of heels, he hasted from his Clutches as hard as he could drive.

This Victory thus obtained, Sir *Billy* imagined himself no less than a Second *Hercules*, resolving to undergo whatsoever attempt should happen unto him; In the mean time the Gentlemen with all the Rhetorick they could use, were perswading the Groom to make a Second onset on *Billy*, but fear standing at the Gates of his Eyes, put back all perswasions which they could use; whereupon, willing to have the Frolick continued, one of the Gentlemen undertook the Adventure, and putting on a Buff Coat, a Helmet on his head, and taking a Sword in his right Hand, and a lighted Torch in the other, he marched directly to Sir *Billy*, who very watchfully attended his coming: And now *Calliope*, thou sacred Sister of the Muses, assist my Pen in describing this Jest-Earnest Combat.

*Assist my trembling and unable Quill,  
O all ye Powers that haunt Parnassus Hill.*

This young Gentleman, whom for Distinction sake we will call *Orlando*, seemed with great fury to make a pass at *Sir Billy*, who seeing his bright Sword coming directly towards him, went backwards, but not as the Ram to return with the greater fury, but with the same mind as Cowards, who run away from the Battel, only to be kill'd further from their fellows. Thus retreated he back until at last his back touched a Brick Wall, when all on a sudden remembering the Goddess he had devoted himself unto, it put fresh Vigor into his Veins, and crying out, *O Beauteous Dulcinea assist thy Servant*, he laid about him with as much Courage as *Arcides* when he encountred with the *Nemean* Lyon, so that the Gentleman, to defend himself, was forced to use his utmost skill, but his Torch being longer than *Sir Billy's* Sword, he crost the Fire thwart his Face, which put *Sir Billy* again to the retreat; but it would have made one to split with laughter, to see how the Gentleman coming up to *Sir Billy*, and having given him three or Four slaps with the flat of his Sword, he would fly back again as it were for fear, whom *Sir Billy* then would eagerly pursue; Thus did they make good their ground for several times, when at last *Mr. Orlando* wearied as well as satisfied with the divertisement, ran quite away from *Sir Billy*, whom the Conquerour would not pursue, it being his duty then only to watch his Arms.

Next Morning no sooner did *Aurora* begin to display her Golden locks, and the Sun to gild the *Horizon* with his Radiance, but the Gentleman, accompanied with the Master of the House, went altogether to visit *Sir Billy*, and to Congratulate with him for his great manhood in defending his Arms. *Arms* (said *Sir Billy*) *I think I have been Encountred this Night with the Fellest of the infernal Region; but had they had the strength of Ascapart who could bear a Knight at Arms and his Horse under his Arm; or the skill of Proteus who could Transform himself into what Shape he pleased; or the cunning of Ulysses who could free himself from the Charms of the Incanting Syrens, yet should I have repell'd them all by the help of this my Sword Rosero.* Then recounted he to them the dangerous fight he had with the burning Bear, whose Head he broke all in pieces; as also his Encounter with the Knight of the flaming Torch; all which he exprest very highly to his own prowess, yet imputing it in a great part to the Succour he received from the beautiful *Dulcinea*, the Empress of his affections, and to whom all Ladies in the World for beauty ought to become her Tributaries.

They all very much applauded his manhood, and the great happiness of the Lady who had such an undaunted Champion to her Servant. And now it was concluded by all hands he was worthy to receive the Honour of Knighthood, which was immediately conferred on him by the Lord of the Castle, (for so did *Sir Billy* account it to be) in this manner.

*Sir Billy* being Armed from Top to Toe so well as those uncouth pieces could be patched up, attended on by his Squire *Ricardo*, was brought before the Master of the House, who was placed in the Hall, being mounted on a Chair of three ascents high: *Sir Billy* coming before him was commanded to Kneel, which being done, the Old Gentleman struck him such a blow on the Neck with his Sword, as *Sir Billy* had cause to remember his Knighting, and then said to him, *Rise thou Victorious Knight at Arms, the Killer of Gyants, and queller of Monsters, the most Renowned Sir Billy of Billerecay; Ricardo* seeing such Honour as he thought done



done to his Master, began to applaud his Fortune that ever he became Squire to so brave a Knight; and his belly being recruited with better Victuals than ever his teeth were acquainted withall before, he thought himself not inferior to the King of Spain, and accordingly demeaned himself, which humour of his the Servants of the House so well followed, that he became no less conceited than his Master, who now being made Knight, was Company only for those of the better Sort.

Now to compleat their mirth, it so happened that at the same time there came two or three Friends to visit this Gentleman, who seeing Sir Billy strutting it in Armor, much wondered what the Antick meant, to be so clad in a time of general Peace; but being informed by the aged Gentleman of his Extravagant Humours, they were highly taken with the conceit, and resolved to tooth him up in his Rediculous Fancies, whereupon one of them Accoasted him in this manner.

*Most Magnanimous Knight, whose Heroick Actions will hereafter be sounded forth by Fanes Silver Trumpet; we hearing of your resolution to revive again the Honour of Chevalry, which too long hath lain neglected in these times of Ease and Idleness, came to congratulate this your Noble intention, which will hereafter Eternize your Name with Fame so far as Phcebus shall dart forth his Golden Rays; How happy therefore will that Poet be, whose lucky fate shall guide him to record your never dying Facts, and thrice happy will that noble Lady be, on whom you shall please to cast your Affection, having such a Champion to Vindicate her Honour, the Sound of whose Name carries Victory before him.*

Sir Billy stood gaping with his Mouth wide open, greedily to suck in those praises which were bestowed upon him; Ricardo as greedy of Fame as his Master, asked the Gentleman, if that Poet, Historian, or writer, who recorded his Masters Acts, did not also set forth the Deeds of Squires Errant? Billy laughing at his Squires simplicity, told him, that was a needless question, since the Knights and the Squires actions were as inseparable as a Fish and Water, without the one the other Dyes; Only the Knight was to be praised for his valiant Acts, and the Squire for Obedience to his Commands. *But where then (said Ricardo) is the reward of his Service?* For that, said Billy, after the Knight hath finished his Conquest, he commonly makes him the Captain of some Castle, or Governour of an Island, according as he finds his abilities answerable thereto. *Never question my abilities (said Ricardo) in any such things, for he that knows how to govern himself, knows how to govern a Family, and he that can govern a Family, need not fear but he can govern an Island.*

This discourse betwixt Sir Billy and his Squire made the Gentlemen to laugh heartily; who now consulted together upon what attempt to put this new made Knight, at last they agreed to set up a *Quinten*, which is a cross bar turning upon a pole, having a broad board at the one end, and a bag full of Sand hanging at the other; Now he that ran at it with his Launce, if he hit not the board was laughed to Scorn, and if he hit it full and rid not the faster, would have such a blow with the sand Bag on his Back, as would sometimes beat them off their Horses.

But this Exercise dislik'd Sir Billy, because as he said, it was not comprized in the

the Rules of Knight Errantry, which was to succour distressed Ladies, to kill Gyants and Monsters, to raze down enchanted Castles, and destroy Negromancers, to punish Tyrants, and to succour the Widows and Fatherles; and therefore he refused to make one in any thing but what pertained to Knight Errantry; yet with much intreaty he permitted his Squire *Ricardo* to try his Fortune therein; whilst he, with the Gentleman of the House, and some Ladies there present, being mounted on a seat made for that purpose, did there sit to behold it.

The Gentleman which encountred Sir *Billy* was the first that ran at the *Quinten*, who performed the same with great agility, riding with such swift speed as if his Horse scorned to touch the Ground, whereby he came off with great applause. The next that ran was a Servant of the House, Steward to the Gentleman, who hitting the board too full, e'er he could pass away, had such a blow with the sand-bag as almost felled him off his Horse. Next *Ricardo* was persuaded to take his turn, whose Horse being thought not swift enough for such an Enterprize, the Gentleman lent him one of his best Geldings, on which being mounted in a great Saddle, he began his race, which was so swift, that *Ricardo* fearing falling, Curbed him with the Bitt, whereat the Horse fell to Curvetting and Rising with his fore Feet; whereupon *Ricardo* threw away his Launce, and held with both his hands on the Pummel of the Saddle; The Horse being thus freed from his Reins, ran with *Ricardo* on his back all about the Ground, where multitudes of people were assembled to behold the Sport, which caused such a laughter amongst them, with loud Clamors and Noyse, as Cannons make when they disgorge their Fiery Vomits, or that of *Nilus* precipitated Cararacts, which Deafens all the people that dwell thereabout.

Sir *Billy* was exceeding wroth at this disgrace of his Squire, threatening Revenge on all those who rejoyced at his Misfortune; but the Gentlemen pacified him all they could, telling him it was only the Fortune of War, and though Knights Errant were of themselves invincible, yet their Squires were not always so. That therefore it would be convenient for him to try the adventure himself to recover the disgrace of his Squire; for though succouring distressed Ladies and Killing of Gyants were the main properties belonging to Knights Errant, yet that they accustomed themselves also to Justs and Tournaments, which were near of kin unto the *Quinten*. That he need not doubt but by the might of his invincible Arms, and the assistance of the Lady of his Affections, but he should be victorious in whatsoever he went about. These and the like words so Encouraged Sir *Billy*, that he swore by the honour of his Knighthood, he would encounter with the *Quinten* although it were the Devil himself.

The Gentlemen having now what they desired, soothed him up, until he was mounted on his *Bellerophon*, for he would ride no other, professing that *Bucephalus* the Horse of King *Alexander* was not comparable unto him; so taking his Launce in his hand, he rid with all his might at the *Quinten*, and hitting the Board a full blow, brought the Sand-Bag about with such Force, as made him measure his length on the Ground. This disgrace of the Master, caused a louder laughter than that of the Servant, but in Sir *Billy* it wrought such shame and Confusion, as had almost banisht in him all further thoughts of Knight Errantry; wherefore the Gentlemen, to keep up the humour, told him, that this was done by the  
envy



envy of the wicked Negromancer Soto ; who was an utter Enemy to all Knights Errant. And might it not be (said Sir Billy) for want of invocating the help of the Lady of my Affections, the Beautiful Dulcinea ? O yes (quoth Orlando) that hath often happened to several other Knights before ye ; St. George the valiant Champion of England, for want of invocating the assistance of his Lady Sabra, induced a Seven years Imprisonment in a Dungeon in Persia ; the Renowned Montelion Knight of the Oracle, never entered into any Combat, but he implored the help of his Lady Philotheta, which made him prosper in all his undertakings. Paladine of England used always to crave the Assistance of his Lady Nonparelia, and the Honour of Chevalry, Don Beliavis of Greece, in all his Combats evermore called out upon the Princess Florisbella Daughter to the Souldan of Babylon. Let me therefore advise ye, as one Born to Acts of Chevalry, to have always in your remembrance the Laws of Knight Errantry, that neither Magicians, Gyants, Negromancers, nor Monsters, may hereafter ever have any advantage over ye.

Sir Billy upon this, imputing all his ill luck to the want of a due observation of the Customs used by former Knights Errant, resolved to be more careful therein ; and thinking this Council of Orlando to proceed from the Sage Frison, (a Famous Enchanter which he had read of in his Books of Knighthood) he returned him many thanks, vowing henceforward to have his Lady Dulcinea always in his Thoughts, she being the Mirrour of Beauty, Map of Modesty, and non-parallel of all perfections of her time.

And now being in this resolution, and having accomplished his Business in reference to his receiving the Order of Knighthood, he resolved to depart from thence to seek out adventures, to the great grief of his Squire Ricardo, who notwithstanding his disgrace in running at the *Quintén*, was loath to depart, having his Belly stuffed every day with store of meat, and Bottles of Wine, things unknown in his Fathers House, and knew not well when they should come to such another Castle to be so well entertained ; He therefore conjured by the Honour of his Knighthood, and as he desired hereafter to Conquer Islands, and Incharned Castles, not to depart so hastily, but to remain there until they had participated further of the Lord of the Castles bounty.

Sir Billy, whose mind ran upon Honour more than upon his belly, to check his Squires Gluttonous Appetite, began to read to him this Lecture of Sobriety.

How happy was the Golden Age, when men fed only on Acorns and Nuts, and whose Drink was Water from the Cristal Spring ; when those two wrangling Words of Meum and Tuum were not known in the World, but mens hearts and Houses were open, and every ones Dwelling was a general rendezvous ; when instead of Cups and Dishes, they Drank out of the Palms of their Hands, having nor need of Coin nor Golden Ur, for all things were in common to them. Then could not the Weight of a Fee Poize Justice to which side she pleased, and Mens Love was pure down-right, not having learn'd the Hipocrisy of Complements. The Hob-nail'd Swain whistled nor then to his Teem, for the Teening Ground gave all things freely without Tillage, and Roses and Flowers produced themselves without the help of Gardners. The Bees were not confin'd to Hives, but freely bit their Honey in the clefts of the Rocks and Hallow Trees, carrying no sting but Honey in their Tails. The Name of Lawyer was not known un-

to them, and their thoughts were as chaste as the Vestal Nuns. The Sheep and Lambs fed securely, nor did the Steer or Ox dread the slaughtering Butcher. The Silk Worm did not then work to cloath Gallants with Pride, and instead of Down-Beds their lodging was on the cold Ground, they needed not Physicians, because they knew not what sickness meant, and want of excess kept them free from Diseases. Those were rightly termed the Golden Days, not that Gold was then so plentiful, but because men had no need of it. The Covetousness of which is the cause of all the mischiefs in the World; Thefts, Rapines, Murthers, False-Swearings, Lying and Deceit, all proceed from the desire of Gold, as doth Sicknesses and all manner of Diseases from Gluttony and Excess. Rouse up thy self therefore Friend Ricardo, and give not thy Mind to eating and Idleness, for Fame calls us aloud from the Bed of Sluggishness, and the way to Honour is by Hazardous Attempts.

Ricardo regarded not much his Masters discourse, as one whom no arguments could convince against ease and eating, but that it was the most delightful Life that Mortals in this World can attain unto; But Sir Billy, whose mind ran more upon fighting than feeding, would by no means condescend to stay any longer, wherefore taking his leave of the Lord of the Castle (as he termed it) as also of the other Gentlemen, who were very well pleased with the diversions he made them, he and his Squire having buckled on their Armor, and mounted their Steeds, betook themselves unto their Journey.

## C H A P. 4.

*Sir Billy being dubbed Knight, Marcheth forth to seek Adventurers: His encounter with Poppet-Gyants: His Imprisonment in a wooden Enchanted Castle; and Entertainment by the Sage Freston.*

**W**Hilst Sir Billy and his Squire were thus Acting the Pageant Knight, Old Thomasio who was returned from paying his Landlord his Rent, being informed of the Departure of his Son, and (what was most dear to him) two of his best Horses, he broke forth into such a sad Lamentation, as would have grieved a Heart of Flint to hear it, Cursing the time that ever he put his Son to School, but more, that ever he bought him any Books of Knight Errantry. Saying, *They were all composed of meer witchcraft, and therefore not fit to be suffered in a well governed Common-wealth.* And now seeing he could not come at his Son, he resolved to be revenged on his Books; but being ignorant in all sorts of Learning, he associated to him Sir John the Curate of the Parish to peruse them, and whom he condemned for faulty to be cast into the fire.

Billy had locked up all his Library in a very large Chest, of which he carried the Key always about him, and therefore Old Thomasio caused it to be broke open. The first Book they laid hands on, was *Sir Bevis of Southampton*; This (said the Curate) is the Father of our English Romancers, made upon a Knight who lived in the time of King William the Conqueror, but hath in it an Ell of lying to an Inch of Truth. And by my fay (said Thomasio) a Liar they say is as bad as a Thief, and therefore into the Fire he shall go, although he were a killer of Gyants and Dragons. The next that came to hand was the First and Second part of *Amadis de Gauls* in English: The Original of this (said the Curate) is French, of which there is above thirty Parts, but we in English have but Six of them. And by Plough Share (said Thomasio



Thomasio) that is too much by above five of them, and therefore he shall accompany his fellow Sir Bevis in the fire. Next (said the Curate) here is Palmerin D'oliva in three Parts, Primaleon of Greece in three Parts, Palmerin of England in three Parts, and Palmedas in one, all these are one continued History of an Emperor of Constantinople, called Palmerin D'oliva, his Son Primaleon, and Grandson Palmerin of England, and others. By my say (said Thomasio) these Palmerins and Amadisles were notable Cutting and Slashing Blades, which made a great disturbance in the World, but we shall reconcile them all in one fire together, notwithstanding they were such big Fellows in their time.

The next (said the Curate) is Don Bellianis of Greece, one who could cut two or three Gyants in two by the middle at a stroke. Were he Achilles of Greece (said Thomasio) he should go to the Fire, and if I had the Authour of his History he should likewise accompany him for his abominable lying. The next (said the Curate) is Paladine of England, one also of French extraction, but more modest in his expressions than Don Bellianis: His Modesty (said Thomasio) shall not excuse him, but he shall to the fire, were he as big a Frenchman as Charlemain. But what Sir John is that Book which hath a Curtain drawn over the Letters in the beginning of it? This (said the Curate) is worthy to be preserved, it being the History of Argalus and Parthenia, written by the divine Poet Mr. Francis Quarles. Why (said Thomasio) was not that Argalus a Knight-Errant? O no (quoth the Curate) but one who was premised for the pattern of Virtue, and example of true Love and Magnanimity.

These words gave the noble Argalus a reprieve from the Fire, but the next they laid hands on felt a worse Fate, which was the Mirror of Knighthood in Nine Parts, for which Thomasio would hear no excuse, but said, that the fire would purge it from all its lyes, wherewith that and other Books of Knight Errantry do abound; whereupon it was cast into the Fire; as also, the Four Sons of Amon, Arlus of great Brittain, Arthur of little Brittain, Valentine and Orson, Parismus and Parismusus, Montelian Knight of the Oracle, Ornatius and Artesia, the Seven Champions of Christendom, Guy of Warwick, Cleodraon and Cloryann, Chinon of England, Galien of France, Arator Prince of Greece, Tom a Lincoln the Red Rose Knight, Huon of Burdeaux, Pheander the Maiden Knight, and all other Books of that Nature, of which he would spare none; and indeed he had none of the more refined Sort, such as the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, Benvolio and Urania, The Illustrious Rassa, Grand Cyrus, Aspreo, Palexander, Erenana, the banished Virgin, Coralbo, Ariana, Clelia, Cassandra, Cleopatra, Pharamond, Iphigenis, Grand Scipio, and some others. These I conceive either were not written in his time, or too dear for him to purchase. Some Books of Poetry he had likewise amongst them; but all Thomasio's spight being against Knight Errantry, he let the Books of Poetry escape the Fire, yet judged them not good for any thing, unless to be put under Mutton-Pasties or Apple-Pies.

In the mean time while these things were a doing, Sir Billy was pursuing his Knightly Adventures, little thinking what a fiery tryal his Knights Errant were put to at home. And long he thought the time until he might meet with some Adventure which might Crown his undertakings; being fully perswaded that now he was made Knight, no power whatsoever could withstand the force of his Victorious Arm. In the mean time his Squire was devoutly praying to meet with such another

another Castle wherein to recruit his wambling belly, which was every five or six hours incessantly craving for a supply. Having thus rid about three or four Miles, they came to a Market-Town, where at that time was kept a Fair, in the middle whereof was a stately Inn, in which was a Poppet-Show to be seen, to which purpose they had hanged out a painted Cloth, whereon was this written.

*Within this place is to be seen, the Fight betwixt little David and Goliath the Gyant of Gath, as also of other Gyants killed by David's Servants.*

Billy having read the Writing, and finding that Gyants were within, he resolved to encounter with them; so alighting from his Horse, he gave him to Ricardo to walk, whilst he went to kill the Gyants, and following the multitude, he came to a door where a Woman sat to take Money of them who would see the Show; Billy knowing that Knights Errant were priviledged to pass any where without Money, refused to pay, whereupon he was stopped from going in, at which incensed he drew his Sword, threatening Death to any who should oppose him; and so without any further opposition, ran into the Chamber where the Gyants were placed upon a Table ready to be shown: Sir Billy no sooner saw them, but quick as lightning he fell upon them with his trusty Sword *Rosero*, making such havock amongst them, that the Master of the Show, like a man distracted, ran out crying, *help, help; Murther, Murther*, for his Gyants were kill'd before the fight begun.

This hideous out-cry presently raised a confused rabble, who running in fell upon Billy, belabouring him as he had done the Poppers, who yet so valiantly behaved himself, that twice or thrice he put them to the retreat, when at last came the Constable attended with six or eight rusty Bill-men, who commanded him in the Kings Name to keep the Peace. *Thou wicked Negromancer* (said Sir Billy) *I defy thee, and all the Gyants in the World*: And with that fell upon the Constable with might and main, dealing such blows as *Hector* when he hew'd down the *Greeks*. But alas what can single valour do against a multitude, *Hercules* himself may be overmact by number, One of the watchmen coming behind him, Cowardly knock'd him down with his Halbert, and now there lay sprawling on the Ground our young *Bevis*, our *Anadix*, *Palmendos*, or what you will please to call him. In the mean time the people abroad had seiz'd on Ricardo, demanding of him what mad-man that was he came withal, and for what reason they went so clad in Armor? *That Magnanimous Hero* (said Ricardo) *which you saw, is the Victorious Knight at Arms, Sir Billy of Billerecay, and I his Squire Don Ricardo, Born to be the Governour of an Island when my Master can conquer it; the reason why we go in Armor is, because it is the Custom of Knight Errants, and Squire Errants, so to do.* These words made the people to think they were a couple of mad-men, and therefore securing their Horses, they put both the Knight and his Squire in the Cage.

Billy inclosed in this wooden Tenement, began to rage exceedingly: *Vile miscreants* (said he) *the off-spring of Vipers and Poysonous Toads, Enemies to Magnanimity, and Foes to true Chevalry; think not although by your damned spells you have Conjur'd my Body, yet I question not but by the help of the Sage Freston I shall* be.



be delivered from your Incantments; Then will I seek my revenge upon you, laying the lofty Battlements of your building, which seem to eye with the Pyramids of Egypt, equal with the dust, like to that glorious Phœnician City of King Priamus, now overspread with stinking weeds, and lousesome Puddles; your Wives and Children I will send into banishment, and bring you into such intolerable Thraldom, that the Torments of Sisyphus, Tantalus, nor Oedipus, shall be comparable to those I will inflict upon you.

These his raging words made the Boys to hoot at him, whilst Ricardo sat sighing to see his hopes of an Island come to a Cage, which yet his Master would needs persuade him was done by Incantment: Have you not read (said he) how the seven Champions of Christendom having killed the Gyants which belonged to Leoger the Knight of the black Castle, yet by a Magician they were cast upon a Bed, from whence they could not stir until they were delivered by St. Georges three Sons. But said Ricardo, I cannot Imagine that he was a Magician that put us into this Cage, but such another man of Office as we have at Billerecay, which they call a Constable, because he had in his hand a painted Staff, which shewed him to be a Man in Authority. That (said Billy) proceeds from your Ignorance, not knowing that a Magician can transform himself into what shape he pleases; does not the Devil sometimes take upon him the likeness of a Broker, sometimes of a Horse-Chaise, sometimes of a Bum-Bayliff, under which Shapes he acts so many Rogueries, for no Man of himself can do such wickednesses, but only the Devil that assumes their Shapes.

Whilst the Knight and his Squire were thus discoursing, the Constable came to fetch them before a Justice, at which news Ricardo wept bitterly; but Billy was so firm in his determination that you might as soon have removed the Earth from its Center, or stopped the Sun in his diurnal Course, as to have caused him to alter his mind, or think that those Books of Knight Errantry, were not undoubted verity, and as true as the voice of Jove it self. The Justice, though grave and solid in his office, yet was one who much delighted in mirth and harmless Sport, who being informed of all what had passed, much admired at the ones boundless extravagancy, and the others harmless simplicity. The Master of the Show made a grievous complaint against him of the wrong he had sustained; Never (said he) after a Battel did you behold the dismembred Limbs of slaughtered Carcasses lie so Scattered about as in this Skirmish; here lay an Arm, there a Leg, especially my Gyant Goliath was so bemangled, that his ruined Carcase was not fit for a Scare-Crow. At that word Scare-Crow, Ricardo stepping forth said, My Master never has so ill Fortune as when he encounters with Scare-Crow Gyants. And thereupon told the Justice of the blows they had received by encountering with the Scare-Crow Gyant, as is related in the Second Chapter.

The Justice was so highly pleased with this discourse, that he resolved with himself to further the humor; and so giving the Master of the Show ten pound for damage, he discharged the Constable of him, and invited the Knight and his Squire home to his House, where he feasted them Royally, which made Ricardo begin afresh to have a good opinion of Knight Errantry, for feeding was more agreeable to his Nature by far than Fighting. And now Sir Billy began a little to be more reconciled to reason, and to discourse without rageing, whereupon the Justice desired him to honour him so much as to give him an account of his forepassed Life, that

by that means posterity might be informed of his Heroick Acts, and by reading his Life leave an Example for posterity to imitate.

Sir (said Billy) Courtesy is one of the vertues inherent to Knights Errantry, and I having received so many Favours from you for my self and my Squire, cannot in gratitude do less, than to give you an impartial account of what you desire, which yet howsoever is but only the beginning of what I intend shall be performed by my Victorious Arm.

Know then (said he) most worthy Governour of this Famous City, that the place which will be for ever Honoured by my Birth, is the Town of Billerecay in the County of Essex; my Parents happy in producing a Son of such Magnanimity as the Gods have endued me with, to be the preserver of Innocence, and avenger of wrongs. In my blooming youth it was my Fortune as other Knights Errant have been, to be Captivated by the beaumsfull looks of the fair Dulcinea, the Mine, the Adazine, the Common-Wealth of Beauty; one upon whom Nature and curious Art have done their best to sum that rare perfection which transcends the power of belief. For the Love of this peerless Parragon, this Phanix of perfection, have I took upon me this order of Knight Errantry, not doubting but by my Victorious Arm, to make her Name as Famous as was that of Cloriana, the beloved Mistress of the renowned Knight Cleocreton Prince of Hungary.

The Justice commended him highly for his resolution: But (said he) most valiant Knight, I wonder that in all this time you do not acquaint the divine Lady of your Affections with your proceedings, who no doubt must needs think long to hear of your Achievements; Besides, it was always the Custom of Knights Errant to imploy their Squires on such Embassies, therefore you having such a peerless Non-parelia to your Lady, cannot in Civility to her omit such a thing.

Now by the Honour of my Knighthood (said Sir Billy,) next Morning no sooner shall Phcebus guild the Mountain tops with his resulgent beams, but I shall send my Squire Ricardo with a Letter to that Queen of Love the beauteous Dulcinea. And thereupon borrowing Pen Ink and paper of the Justice, because Knights Errant never carry any thing about them, but only Mouths to Ear, and Swords to fight, he writ to her in these Words.

*Sir Billy's Letter to Dulcinea.*

**M**OST Beauteous Dulcinea, the joy of my Heart, and Goddess of my Affections; by whose influence my Arm becomes irresistible, so that Gyants fall down at the first stroak of my Valour. I make no question but the same of my deeds will arrive to your knowledge before this my Letter, by which thou maist understand how victoriously I proceed. And all by the power of your incomparable Beauty, which I have and will maintain to be unmatched. As for the Particulars of my Adventures, I leave them to be related by my trusty Squire Ricardo: as also how for thy sake I suffered Imprisonment by a wicked Negromancer, with an Incharnted staff, and how I was delivered from his damned Spells by the help of the Sage Freston, in whose Castle I now remain till I receive an answer from thee, which I shall expect with all Impatience: till then farewell, thou Elixir of all Beauty, the first and best original of all fair Copies, thine ever constant Knight.

*Sir Billy of Billerecay.*

Having



Having finished his Letter, he shewed it to the Justice, whom with Sir Billy we must now call the Sage *Freston*; who applauded it exceedingly, as the highest piece of ingenuity that Art ever contrived; telling him, that that Ladies heart must be more obdurate than Marble whom such language could not mollify. Billy was mightily pleased with his expressions, and calling his Squire Ricardo unto him, he thus exprest himself.

*My trusty Squire, I must now imploy thee upon a weighty affair, which I am the more willing to do, knowing thy abilities answerable to thy good intentions, - hereupon I have deputed thee my Ambassador, Nuncio, or Messenger, to deliver this Letter into the hands of that abstract of true Beauty, whose radiant look strikes every gazing eye stark blind, and keeps the amazed beholder under the stupid tyranny of Love and wonder; I mean the Beautiful Dulcinea, the Mistress of my Affections, and Sole Commandress of my undertakings; and see thou do it in a garb and posture worthy the Servant of so illustrious a Knight, that afterwards it may be Inroled by him that shall Write my History with Commendations to thy Eternal Fame.*

Ricardo was much surpriz'd at his Masters superabundant Rhetorick; but loath to lose a place of so good entertainment, where instead of fighting was full feeding, and no gashing nor slashing but only of Loins of Beef, Shoulders of Mutton, and good fat Capons, all which suited extraordinary well with his Stomach; But what most of all troubled him, was, that he was to go he knew not whether, to deliver a message to he knew not who; and therefore grumbling told his Master, that he Commanded him impossibilities, to find out a Lady of which there was none such but only in Imagination.

*O thou lump of Ignorance (said Sir Billy), knowest thou not Joan Grumball? whose form is such as might call the World to Wars, and make it hazard all its Valour for her Beauty; she it is that is the Dulcinea thou art to go unto, and offer up my Service at the shrine of her Beauty. Jone Grumball (said Ricardo) why she is the lushest Lass in all our Town, either to fill Dung-Carr, drive a Wheel-Barrow, or carry grains to serve the Hogs; but for Beauty in my opinion she's no more to be compar'd to Betty our Parsons Maid, than is Mr Offly's white Hind to your Fathers brindled Cow, however I will carry the Letter to her, and doubt not but I will Complement with her as well as the best Squire that ever Served Knight Errant since Knight Errantry was in Fashion.*

#### CHAP. 5.

Ricardo is sent with a Letter to Dulcinea, in the mean time Sir Billy encountreth with a monstrous Gyant in defence of the Tanabulan Princess, whom he Manfully overthrows.

**N**EXT Morning no sooner had Aurora arose from Aged Tuberos Bed, and scattered the light from off her Saffron Wheelles, but the rimple Knight Ricardo shaking off sleep from those silken Fumes that do bind the Senses, arose from his Bed, and having taken a lusty Breakfast, he then told his Master he was ready to perform his Commandment in delivering his Letter to the fair hands of his beautiful Lady Dulcinea, alias Joan Grumball; and question not but to bring you an Answer according to your desires; Nor shall I arrogate any of the Honour of your Achievements to my self, though in many of the Encounters I bore equal blows.

blows with you, but whatsoever is due to your praise therefore, it shall be wholly and solely yours.

Had not Sir Billy's mind been wholly taken up on thoughts of Knight Errantry, he might easily have perceived how grossly his Squire had abus'd him; but he imputing it all to duty, and respect which he bore to his Valour, was contented with praise though never so ridiculous. And therefore delivering him the Letter, with many Commendations reiterated to the Mistress of his Affections, he took his leave of him, who mounting on *Pugnoto*, his trusty Steed, leaving his Armor behind him to the care of his Master, who promised to stay till his return, he took his Journey towards *Billerecay*, where we leave him for a time, the whilst our Pen shall wait upon his Master.

The Justices Servants minding to put a trick upon this our Knight Errant, dressed up the Foot-Boy in Womans Apparel, adorning him with Rings, Bracelets, and other Jewels; so that he seemed to be a compleat Princess, which part he was to act, attended on by two youths who went to School in the Town, and were to personate her Brothers. These being accoutred in this manner, were by the Steward of the House conducted to Sir Billy, who was walking in a Garden, Contemplating of the perfections of his *Dulcina*; Being come before his Princess *Nicosia* (for so was she called) kneeling upon her knees thus spake to him.

*Most Renowned Knight, whose Valiant Acts the World both admires and dread, who were't born for the comfort of all in distress, and for the Terror and punishment of presumptuous Offenders. If ever pity, that poor comfort of Calamity, creep into your Heart, I beseech you take Compassion of a distressed Princess whom unjust Tyranny hath banish't from my Native Habitation.* Having proceeded so far, Sir Billy, who was as courteous as he was valiant, would not permit her any longer to kneel, but raising her from the ground, he said, *Most peerless Princess, although my Honour of Knighthood might claim such observance at your hands, yet know that Courtesie Harbours in Heroick Breasts, who are readier to give Benefits than to receive Thanks; let me therefore know your requests, wherein you have been wronged, and question not but by the help of my Victorious Arm you shall be righted.*

Sir (said she) *my native Country is Tantabilus, my Father the unhappy Prince thereof, unhappy in having such a Daughter, whose Beauty and Breeding might have been a comfort unto him, although it proved the cause of his undoing; for Fame having (how worthily I know not) blazed abroad my perfections thorough divers Countries, it came at last to the ears of a great Magician named Diabolo, the Lord of an Enchanted Castle, standing on the Confines of Arduro, from whence he sent a Letter to my Father, desiring to have me in marriage, which if he refused, he threatened to take me by force, and in stead of a Wife to make me his Concubine. This Message was ill rested by my Father, but much more by me who was to be his alter idem, or second self; for when I understood what he desired, or rather to say more truer, what he demanded; I brake forth into such a violent passion as possesseth the Mad Orestes when he was distraught his Wits, who had seen the Picture of Alecto, or with what manner of countenance Medea killed her own Children, needed but take my Face for the full satisfaction of his knowledge in that point; vowing rather to be buried*



buried in a Grave, than Bedded with such a lawlesse person. My father seeing me in such a deep Passion, comforted me all he could, vowing to lay his Crown at stake, and venture both his Life and Kingdom, e'er he should obtain me at his hands; and so sending away the Messenger with a flat denial, he returned again to his Master, who full fraught with Indignation to have his suit rejected, threatened revenge in the highest manner that could be inflicted. And to that purpose raised what forces he could, and having store of Money, hired to his aid a mighty Gyant, of whom, our People were so afraid, that they stood before his Face like trembling Doves before the swooping Eagle, or the timorous Hare from the pursuing Grey-Hound. So that in fine he drove him quite out of his Kingdom, into the Land of Lycaon, whither he sent him a Messenger, that if in two Months time he could provide him a Champion that would fight with his Gyant, if he overcame him, he would restore his Kingdom again unto him, but if the Gyant overcame his Champion, then should I be at his will and disposal. Now most worthy Knight, hearing the Fame of your memorable Adventures, and how you have vowed your self to the Honour of Chevalry; my Father sent me his distressed Daughter, accompanied with these my sorrowfull Brothers, to crave your aid against this cruel Gyant; not doubting but of your accustomed goodness as former Knights Errant have used to do, you will Succour distressed Innocence, and quell the pride of this daring Gyant, which will be for your eternal Fame, and memorize your name with Honour to all posterity.

Sir Billy gave great attention to this discourse, and as if the wrongs of the Tantalus Prince had infused fresh vigour into his breast, he swore by the Truncheon of Mars, that the Gyant had not long to live; but then he began to think with himself whether he should perform this adventure before the return of his Squire; to which the Justice under the name of the Sage Freston, told him, that he should not neglect such an opportunity wherein his own honour, with that of the Princesses preservation were so highly concerned. That the two Months time wherein the combat was to be performed ran on a pace, and that if he should meet with any disaster in the performance thereof, he would be aiding and assisting to him as he was in his deliverance from the enchanted wooden prison. Hereupon Sir Billy animated with these persuasions, resolved to set upon the Gyant the next day.

Whilst these things were Acting, some other of the Servants had fashioned the representation of a Gyant, of a monstrous bulk, but more monstrous countenance, so that his very looks were able to daunt any one, but he who had such an invincible Courage as Sir Billy. This Gyant was armed with a Pole-Axe answerable to his Stature, and so framed, that one behind him could make him to move his weapon, shake his head, and any other Action of his Body as if he were alive; then for speech, a hollow Trunk through his Head into his Mouth, delivered what they would speak by him. Before him they had digged a pit, covered with a Trap-Door, on which whosoever trod was sure to fall therein.

The next morning, to make Sir Billy the more hearty to fight, there was made for him a quart of rich Caudle, which was carried up to his Bed-side by the Sage Freston's Daughter, a Gentlewoman of an incomparable Beauty, which might have tempted any person, unless such a one whose heart was Gloyster'd in Ice, but Knights Errant are always chaste as well as valiant, and her perfections wrought

wrought in him no greater Flame than the Glow-Worm shoots at the cold breast of Night.

Soon after this refection he rose from his Bed, when meeting in the Hall the Sage *Freston*, he demanded of him what Damosel it was that in the shape of an Angel appeared to him that Morning, and whether there were any the Angels or no? for this (said he) could not be an illusion, because I feel by my Stomack the comfortable effects thereof. The Sage *Freston* told him it was the Damosel *Muriell*, sent by the wise *Organda* Lady of the *Fortunate Cave*, who was always a great help to Knights that undertook the defence of distressed Ladies.

*Billy* then called for his Armor, saying, he would not turn his head until he had confronted the Gyant, desiring the Sage *Freston* to go along with him to be a witness of his Valour, to which he willingly condescended, saying, he would not only attend him himself, but also that his Servants should go along with them; so mounting their Horses they rode about the space of half a Mile, when (as it was concluded on amongst them before) one came riding towards them as swift as the nimble Hind or skipping Roe trips it on the Flowry Lawns, who brought them word that the Gyant in pursuit of the *Tamabilan* Princess, was come within a quarter of a Mile of that place, where he stayed for the coming of any Champion that should oppose him in defence of the Lady, as also that he was resolved to try the Combat on Foot, and therefore desired that his Enemy would do the same.

No (said *Billy*) never shall it be said that I owe any part of my Victory to advantage, for had he the strength of *Hercules* who conquered all that ever he fought withal, or two such Gyants joyn'd together, yet would I not fear to encounter with them both, since it was never known that a Gyant did kill a Knight Errant, but always the Knight did beat the Gyant.

With such manner of discourse they came to the place where the Mock-Gyant was, Then Sir *Billy* alighting from his Horse gave him to one of the Servants to hold, and drawing his Sword, marched directly towards the Gyant, but before he came to the place where the Trap Door was laid, the Fellow that was placed behind the Gyant thorough his Trunk, delivered these words unto him.

*Forbear proud Knight to advance any further, unless it be upon thy Knees to beg pardon for thy Life; for if thou dost (mark what I say) I shall cut off thy head, and fix it on a pole to scare Birds, thy Body will I slice into thin pieces for Cocks to make Pies withall to cheat their hungry Customers; thy Arms and legs will I throw into the fields to be devoured by Ravens and Vultures; and thy Guts and Garbage to the Swine, to fill therewith their hungry Paunches.*

But Sir *Billy* nothing daunted at those proud speeches, kept on still his pace, until he came upon the trap door, which giving up, down he slipped into the pit, all the way as he was falling, calling upon the Sage *Freston* for help. The Servants seeing him fall, gave a shout like to the roar of a whole Herd of Lyons, or such as the Artillery of Heaven discharged along the cleaving sky, and running with hasty steps to the place, one more forwarder than the rest was caught in his own device, and slipped in after Sir *Billy*, who louder than he shouted before, cried out for help, help, Sir *Billy* was no sooner down but he recovered his legs, and hearing the other come thundering after him, he imagined it verily to be the

Gyant



Gyant, who all the while Sir Billy was belabouring him, cryed out with might and main, *Murther, Murther*. The old Justice hearing this out-cry, caused the Trap-Door to be removed, when by the light Sir Billy could see his adversary at his feet, to whom he said; *yield thy self unto Miferant; and acknowledge the wrong thou hast done to the Tantarabilan Princess, and I will save thy Life, else look to be served in the same manner thou threatnest to use me, for most just it is to render to every one according to his deservings.*

The Justice hearing the danger his man was in, called to Sir Billy, desiring him to hold his hand, and he would engage for the Gyant; and knowing delay dangerous, he let down a rope into the pit, desiring Sir Billy to take hold of it that they might draw him up; and let the Gyant remain there, and starve and rot in the Dungeon.

Sir Billy willingly embraced the proffer, as accounting the Gyant quite vanished, and so taking hold of the rope was drawn up, to his double Joy, one of having conquered the Gyant, and the other for his deliverance from that dark Dungeon. The Sage Freston congratulated his victory with great expressions of Joy, whilst in the mean time the Servants had conveyed the mock Gyant away. But most of all the Tantarabilan Princess extolled his valour unto the skies, saying, what he had done in her defence, was far beyond what ever was performed by *Amadis de Gaule*, *Huon of Bourdeaux*, *Palmerin of England*, *Palmerin de Oliva*, or *Don Belianis of Greeca*, or any other Knight Errant whatsoever, who had fought in defence of wronged Ladies. Sir Billy tickled with these praises strutted like a Crow in a Gutter, saying, *Most excellent Princess, what ever hath been performed by my valour, comes infinitely far short of your deservings; and as for your Enemy the Magician Diabolo, if he refuse to surrender the Crown again to your Father, let me but know of it, and I shall take such sharp revenge on him and his, that Tygers, and Panthers, shall be accounted merciful in respect of the Cruelty I will shew upon them.*

Sir (said the Tantarabilan Princess) *I am so far beneath the Riches of your Merits, it can be no honour to your Name to rank me in the Number of your humblest Servants.* Sir Billy thought all these Complements spoken to his Commendation, and therefore was as proud of this Victory over the Gyant, as the Macedonian Monarch for the conquest of *Darius*, saying, if that the Gods prolonged his Life, he would free the world from all such Gyants and hateful Monsters.

All their discourse tending thus highly to the applauding of Sir Billy's Valour, they mounted their Horses to return to the Sage Freston's, all the way they rid nothing sounding forth but *Panegyrics* of Billy's praise, which were so welcome to him, that who so viewed his looks, might perceive thereby how inwardly his heart was contented. But having continued there a day or two, and hearing no News at all of Ricardo, he fell into a deep Malancholy, and (as is the use of Lovers) frequented Solitary places, and being doubtful what Answer he should receive from his beloved *Dulcina*, betwixt Hope and Despair he breathed forth this Sonnet.

*Twixt chearfull Hope and comfortless Despair,  
Strangely perplex'd, full sore amaz'd I stand,  
Hope seems to shew the Weather will be Fair,  
And dark Despair says Tempests are at hand.*

*The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerocay,*

*Venture says Hope, Despair doth bid me slack;  
 Hope pricks me on, Despair doth pull me back;  
 Hope will say Hope, Despair doth bid me doubt,  
 Trust me says Hope, Despair says Hope is vain,  
 Shrink not says Hope, Despair cries, not so stout,  
 Labour says Hope, Despair doth shew no gain.  
 Good hap says Hope, Despair says contrary,  
 Hope bids me live, Despair would have me die.  
 Thus 'twixt these two at point of Death I live,  
 In hope of good, yet fearing froward chance,  
 In you is yet a happy hap to give,  
 To bring me out of this despairing Trance.  
 Oh help me then, that thus on knees do cry,  
 Assure my Hope, or in Despair I die.*

*In these Meditations we will leave Sir Billy for a while, to tell you how his Squire Ricardo sped in his Journey to Dulcina*

C H A P. 6.

*How Ricardo in his Journey towards Billerocay met with an Aged Palmer, who gave him an invisible Ring, with which he cheats an Inn-keeper; as also what a Trick he served a Bedlam and a Tinker.*

**R**icardo as you heard in the former Chapter, being sent on an errand to the Lady Dulcina, bethought himself by the way, that if he returned back to Billerocay, old Thomas would apprehend him for stealing of his Horse, and therefore began to doubt whether Squire Errantry would protect him from the Gallows. To prevent which disgrace, he resolved upon the first opportunity to sell his Horse, and with the Mony to maintain himself until he could get into a more safer Service than that of Knight Errantry. Wandring therefore through by-paths as his most ready way, at such time as the days bright burning eye cast scorching Rayes upon the parched Earth, he sat him down under the covert of a broad spreading Oak, and being full of thoughts not knowing what to do, he spyed coming towards him an aged Palmer, one who seemed by the downfall of his mellow years, that Nature had brought him near to the door of Death. This Palmer whose cold Age had frosted his gray Hairs, said to him, Ricardo Esquire to the Famous Knight Errant Sir Billy of Billerocay, I am sent to thee from the Goddess of Fortune, with the invisible Ring, made by the famous Negromancer Trebia, whereby thou shalt perform to thy Master such Services as shall exceed all those which were ever done by any Squire to the best Knight Errant that ever wore Sword.

Then did he instruct Ricardo in the use of the Ring, how putting it on his finger he could be seen by no body, but as soon as it was off he appeared as visible as any other, by which he might both please and pleasure himself in divers feats. It happened at the same time some Maids going by to milk their Cows, Ricardo to try the vertue of his Ring, putting it on his finger, fell to kissing the Maids, which put them to the squeak, feeling his Mouth but seeing no body.

*Ricardo*



*Ricardo* was so far transported with joy of this Ring, that he could scarcely believe so great a truth, not daring to trust his own Eyes, but fearing it to be only some flattering Dream or vain Vision; yet by one infallible Argument he found himself to be awake, which was, that he was thoroughly an hungry. In the mean time the old Palmer was vanished away; wherefore *Ricardo* resolved, the first thing he did to seek out for Belly-Timber, putting his Ring in his pocket, that at a convenient time it might serve to discharge his reckoning.

He had not gone long in his way before he came to a stately Inn, where alighting, he commanded the Hostler to look well to his Horse, and give him as many Oats as he would eat; and walking into the House, with as much state as if he had been a Man of some special Note, he called for a Room and a pint of Canary, with both which he was quickly accommodated. Then asked he what provision they had in the House? with the best of which, taking a small repast, he commanded a Capon to be laid to the Fire for his better Accommodation; during the time while it was Roasting, the Host and he drank two or three Pints of Sack. The Capon being ready he fell to it with an extraordinary Stomach, and with as quick a dispatch washed it down with the briske Canary. But now the main matter of all, the Reckoning came to pay, which for his Horse and himself amounted to seven Shillings. *Ricardo* putting his hand into his Pocket as if to draw out his Money, slipped on his Ring, whereby in an instant he became invisible. This sudden flight of their Guest, with the loss of their Reckoning, put them all into such amaze, that they stood senseless transformed with Wonder. *Ricardo* in the mean time slipped into the Stable, and getting out his Horse, mounted him, Galloped away as fast as he could. This made the Hostler to swear like a Choker, that the Horse should untie himself, and run away with the Saddle on his back, for they could see no Man that rode thereon. And now both Host, Hostess, and Hostler, concluded it was no other than the Devil, who had come thither in the likeness of a Guest, to punish her for false scoring with a crotched Chalk, and the Hostler for Tallowing of Horses Teeth, and Cheating them of their Oats by a half peck with a false bottom.

In the mean time *Ricardo* was gotten quite out of danger, Hugging himself in conceit for the Trick he had served the Inn-keeper, and now he fears no Colours, knowing his Ring a sure preservative against all dangers; but because his Horse was not so invisible as himself, he resolved to leave him behind, and to that purpose bargained with a Farmer for a Weeks keeping, at the end of which he promised to come again and pay him. Then taking his journey towards *Billercay*, fearful of Stocks, Prison, or Gallows, on the way he overtook a Bedlam and Tinker, who had newly been taking a lusty cup of *Ruin-boaz* at the *Bowzinking*. With these *Ricardo* willingly consoorted, minding to make some further experiments with his Ring; so asking them where the best Liquor was to be had, as men very well knowing that way, they soon returned him this pleasing answer. *Master, if you will give us half a dozen, we will help you to such nappy Liquor whose dancing sprightly bubbles defie degenerate Fears, and raise up poor afflicted Hearts to the highest degree of Mirth and Jollity.*

*Ricardo* willingly embraced the motion, and so joyning Company, they struck down a by-path until they came unto a Woods side, by which stood a thatch'd

Cottage with Loam walls and a Clay Chimney, and though it had no sign without, it had that within which a sign signified, *Viz.* Beer which would make a Cat speak, and such transcendent Ale, that *York, Chester, Hull, Nottingham, Darby, nor Gravesend* with a Toast, could parallel it. Here did they sit and tipple *Supernaculum*, until such time as they all grew *hoary*; *Ricardo* promising to pay for all, thinking when the Reckoning came to pay to escape away with his invisible Ring; But his Fortune had like to have proved very bad, for in striving to fuddle the other two, he got so drunk himself that he fell fast asleep, as also did the other two. In this Swinish condition they lay snoring four or five hours, at last the Tinker awaked, and seeing his two Comrades fast, and remembering the Golden promises *Ricardo* had made, he thought to rife the Nest before the Birds were flown; and diving into his Pockets, he found nothing there, but only the Ring, and a knife and sheaf, which Ring he thought to have been as brazen as his Kettles, and therefore was about to throw it away, and with the knife to have cut his Throat for cheating him of his Golden Expectation; Howsoever the Ring he put on his Finger, when instantly the Hostess came in to look after her Guests, but not seeing the Tinker, who by wearing the Ring was become invisible, she fell to jogging the other two to know what was become of the Tinker? the Tinker judged her to be mad to ask for him before his Face, and therefore said, *what a P— is the Old Jade blind she cannot see me?* The Old Woman hearing his voice, but seeing no Body, asked, *where are ye, where are ye?* with that he gave her such a Box on the Ear, as tumbled her down upon *Ricardo*, whose fall awaked him out of his sleep, and hearing the Tinker to Curse and Bann because his Hostess could not see him, he thought he had gotten away his Ring, and feeling in his Pocket found it so indeed, wherefore he was ready to frown away with fear, but recollecting himself he called to the Tinker, saying, *Honest Brother give me thy Hand*, which the Tinker doing, he nimbly slipped the Ring from off his Finger, and as nimbly put it on his own, whereby the Tinker again became visible, but *Ricardo* was no where to be seen.

The Hostess seeing such Juggling tricks, began to call out for her Money, with such a loud voice as waked also the Bedlam, who asking for his Master, I think (said she) your Master is the Devil, for the Tinker and he, are in Dock out Nettle, sometimes seen and sometimes not, and here is Seven Shillings and six pence to pay, and now the Young Devil is fled, which I much marvel at, for I think none of you both have any Crosses about ye to scare him away.

Whilst they were thus arguing the case, *Ricardo* slipped away from them, taking his course directly towards *Billerecay*, where how he sped we shall declare in the next Chapter.

#### C H A P. 7.

How *Ricardo* delivered his Letter to *Jone Grumball*, with her Answer to it. And several exploits performed by *Ricardo* with his Invisible Ring.

IT was at such time of the day when the Curl pate Waggoner of Heaven had well near finish his Diurnal Course, and was driving his panting Steeds down towards the Western Hill, when the Renowned Squire Errant *Ricardo* entred into the Town of *Billerecay*, bending his course directly towards the House of  
Jone



*Jone Grumball*, to whom he delivered *Sir Billy's* Letter, with much obsequiousness, telling her such Stories of his Master's Valour, his Honour of Knight-Hood, and of the great affection he bore to her, that her heart began to melt towards him, even as a pound of Butter melts before the Sun. But being she could not read her self, she sent for a Journey-man Shoemaker to the further end of the Town to read it, one who bore good will unto her, and was at that present inditing a Letter to make her know the affection he bore her; *Crispin* having read it over, and understanding he had a Knight to his Rival, was very much troubled, but *Jone Grumball* was so well pleased with the Sugar-Candy Words he sent unto her, that she vowed her self unto him both Body and Breeches, asking *Ricardo* many questions concerning him; all which he answered in such lofty Language, amplifying his prowess, the respects all people shewed unto him, with the faithful Love he bare unto her, that she was more and more entangled in the Lime-Twigs of Love, vowing and protesting her self his for ever.

*Crispin* by these presages finding his Suit like to have but a cold reception, to avenge himself on *Ricardo*, by whose speeches he thought *Jone's* Heart was estranged from him, he therefore ran to old *Thomasio*, telling him his Son's partner in stealing away his Horses, was at that instant at *Jone Grumball's*, whom he might easily take, and by that means know what was become of his Son, as also of his Horses.

*Thomasio* quick as lightning taking a Constable along with him, went to *Jone Grumball's*; and seizing upon *Ricardo*, threatened him with all the punishments he could reckon up, as Hanging, Burning, Drowning, Killing, Strabbing, and twenty other kinds of Death besides, if he told him not where his Son and Horses were. *Ricardo* nothing daunted at his Domineering, but intending to put a trick upon him, told him that his Son was become one of the greatest Lords in the World, that Kings and Queens craved his Assistance, and Lords and Ladies implored his help; that he commonly kill'd half a dozen Giants for his Breakfast, and bathed his Sword in the Blood of Monsters and Dragons every day; That his Master was at that present in the Sage *Erifon's* Castle, where the most excellent Princess *Tantabilus* courted his Love, but that he had vowed himself only to the Service of his Beautiful *Dulcina*; In sum, that his Master was a Knight, and he was his Squire, and that therefore by the Laws of Knight Errantry, they were not to be troubled nor molested wheresoever they came.

But *Thomasio* being minded not to be put off with such Nominoes, charged the Constable to carry him before a Justice of Peace, to which *Ricardo* willingly consented, whether they immediately address'd themselves; The Justice having heard the Allegations on both sides, perswaded *Thomasio* to go along with *Ricardo*, and see by fair means to bring his Son home again, and if he were so obstinate he would not return, to take away their Horses, which would be a means to spoil their Knight-Errantry, and that they might go the more lovingly together, he called for a Bottle of Sack to drink them into Unity. The Bottle was no sooner set on the Table, but *Ricardo* vowed himself Master thereof, and thereupon slipping on his Invisible Ring, he boldly steps to the Table, and clapping the Bottle of Sack under his Coat, marched away with it not being discerned by any. The Justice and *Thomasio* were stricken into a wonderful Amazement to see the Bottle go away

away without hands as they thought, but much more when they missed *Ricardo*: And now remembring what strange stories he had told of *Billy*, they concluded that both the Master and the Man were turned Conjurers, and therefore dreaded what further mischief might by his means be shewed unto them.

In the mean time *Ricardo* was walked to *Jone Grumballs* with his Bottle of Sack, never pulling off his Ring till he came within the House, that not any one might take any Notice of him. Here did he tell her what a trick he served the Justice, and that therefore he must make all the haste he could to his Master. *Jone* was very well pleased with the Jest, but much more with her part she had in the Sack, and having drank a Health to *Billy*, she desired *Ricardo* to stay so long till she got a Letter in answer to his Master, which by the School Master of the Town was performed for her in these words.

My dearest Knight,

**W**ith what Joy I *Jone Grumball* the Lady of thy affections received your Letter, may better be exprest by Imagination than words, for hearing of the ardent Love that you beare unto me, set forth in such Rhetorical Elocution, it fared with me as with a Beggar, who on a sudden finding a rich Treasure, can scarce believe his own Eyes, but fears it is a Dream or some fond Illusion; Even so my dearest Knight did it happen unto me, hardly could I believe my one Ears, much less imagine that so Heroick Renowned a Champion as thou art, wouldest become the Loadstone of my Affections; But know that I am as much over Head and Ears in Love as thou; Nor do not think me light for yielding so soon; for what Heart can hold out at the Battery of thy Eloquence, thou being a Conqueror of Affections as well as Gyants. I shall think the time long till I hear from thee again, much more till such time I see thee, till when I subscribe my self

Thine in indeared Friendship *Jone Grumball*.

*Ricardo* having received the Letter of her, promised to be very careful in the delivery of it; and she for her part promised him, that when she came to be his Knights Lady, she would be a good Mistress unto him, and help him now and then to a Bitt which her Knight should never know of. *Ricardo* with these promises went away well satisfied, yet resolved with himself to keep secret the vertue of his *Invisible-Ring*.

But he was not so mindful of returning to his Master, as to a few Waggeries with his *Invisible Ring*, which he thought was a better Trade than his Master's killing of Gyants, or relieving distressed Damocels and Ladies; And Fortune was very favourable to his intentions herein, for he had not gone far, but his Stomach (which was most commonly craving) invited him into an Inn to refresh himself, where a Couple of Bayliffs, or Shoulder flappers, were sitting down to dinner with a Shoulder of Mutton and a Capon, having the same day seized on a poor Man's Goods for an inconsiderable value, which they Sold and Imbezzel'd away at their pleasure, to the utter Ruine of the poor Man, and maintainance of their Luxury and Drunkenness; going shares with the Buyers of their seiz'd Goods, which by this means they make the greatest part their own. *Ricardo* understanding what Harpies they were, how that they liv'd by others Ruines, resolved to put a trick upon them; and therefore they being set down to their Victuals without saying Grace, as men unacquainted with any Goodness, he presently

flips



slips on his Ring, and conveys the Capon under his Coat, giving to each of them a blow on the Mouth with his Fist, which though they perceived not from whence they came, yet felt they it smart to some purpose; and each thinking the other had struck him, the one snatches up the Shoulder of Mutton, and therewith struck his fellow on the Face, who half blinded with Greese, and his Cloaths all besmeared with dripping, to revenge the affront, got up the platter, and throwing it at the others head, beat him over a Joynt-stool, who half dazled with the fall, yet recovering his legs, took the Loaf and therewith brake the others head, who in requital snatched up a Flagon of Beer, and dashing it in his Fellows Face, he so laid on him with the Pot, as if he intended to make Mummy of his Flesh. *Ricardo* all this while stood by, laughing heartily to see how they mawled each other, and still at opportunity served lending to each of them some blows on the Face, which they not knowing from whence they came, sought to retaliate upon one another. *Ricardo* to make his revenge more compleat, spying a pair of Scissers in the Window, took them and cut off their locks of hair; so that when they were parted fighting, what with their bloody Noses, batter'd Faces, and crapt Hair, they look'd most rufully.

But now another Quarrel began to arise, the Capon is missing, and the two Bayliffs joyning in one, Swear that the Host had couzened them of it whilst they were fighting; He on the other side calls them cheating Rogues, and that they quarrelled on purpose to steal away his platter, and defraud him of his Reckoning; but vows though they had undone his Neighbour, they should not undo him with their cheating tricks; and thereupon sends for a Constable, vowing he would be paid both for his Meat and the Platter. *Ricardo* seeing matters brought to this pass, marched away with his prize, leaving them to wrangle it out as they could. Now he had not gone far, but (as if he had been born for the punishment of Knaves) he overtakes a Horse-Courier, one who had shaken hands with Honesty as no fit Companion for his Calling. *Then Ricardo* accosts, proffering him a Dinner, and Wine to wash it down at the next Town they came at, which the Horse Courier kindly accepts, wondring at this new Friendship, and thinking he had got some young Cully flusht with Money, whom he was resolved to Milk dry ere he parted with him. So away they went to the next Town, and entering an Inn, call'd for Accommodations to their Capon, which was presently brought them, and the Glasses of Wine trowled about lustily.

Whilst they were thus in their Jollity, there came in a Man from the former Inn, who had seen *Ricardo's* coming thither, but not his going away; And remembering how the Capon and Platter were missing, and seeing such utensils upon the Table, he challenges *Ricardo* with it, whereupon a great contest arose; The Horse-Courier who had thought he had gotten a prize of his Companion, fearing it would prove a blank if he were brought in Partners of his Srealth, began with the first to fall foul on him. The Hostess seeing she had got Cheats to her Guests, was as busie in calling for Money for their Reckoning, so that the whole House was on a sudden in a great Uprouar. *Ricardo* knowing that all their stir was aimed at him, thought it high time to shift for himself, and thereupon slipping on his *Invisible Ring*, took the remainders of the Capon and threw it in his Hostesses Face, and sent the Platter on the same Arrand to the Horse-Courier, who

who therewith half blinded, and sadly mortified, began to cry out in a hideous manner; and that the Informer might not go Scot-free, he also up with a Quart pot, and therewith knockt him down, and then Triumphantly marcht away.

No sooner was he gone, but the Hostess a little recovering her self, falls foul upon the Horse-Courier, saying, he had brought the Devil into her House; but notwithstanding the Devil and all his Imps, she Swore she would make him pay for all the harms was done before he went. The Horse-Courier excused himself, saying, he met with him by chance, and that she might see by his battered Face and broken Head, he was none of his Confederate. The other Fellow, who had lain all this while in a swoond, being now a little revived, began to rail upon him more than the Hostess, so that the poor Horse-Courier, though more batter'd than the other two, could not tell what to do, for notwithstanding all the excuses he could make, nothing would be believ'd but that he was the Devil's partner in all this mischief, and therefore should suffer for him if he did not produce him.

Now was the Horse-Courier at his wits end, not knowing what course to take; sometimes he prayed, sometimes he swore, wishing all the Imprecations upon himself he could reckon up, if he knew the least who it was came with him; but let him use what Oaths and Protestations he would, they could gain no Credit with them; but sending for some of their Neighbours to help them, they resolved to throw him into the River to try him for a Witch; but whilst they were preparing to do it, the Host of the former Inn, with the Bayliffs, hearing how their Capon and Platter was conveyed thither, came to seek for it; These Bayliffs knowing the Horse-Courier, as most commonly Brethren in Iniquity are acquainted together, got a reprieve for him till the matter could be more deliberately discoursed.

And now they began to reckon up their Mischances, and to shew their Wounds, and considering the manner how it was done, they concluded it could be no other than the Devil to punish them for their Sins. Then began the Host to tell the Bayliffs of their Swearing and Cruelty, how many ungodly practises they used to get people in their Churches, and having them there, how unconscionably they used them. The Bayliffs on the other side tell the Host and Hostess of their false Reckonings, Scoreing with a crotched Chalk, and when people were near fuddled, carrying away Flaggons before they were half empty, and frothing them up again, making them pay for whole ones; as also how they gave information to Padders and Men of that profession, the quality of the Guests that Lodged at their Houses. The Horse-Courier was also accused for divers deceits in his Occupation, so that if his picture be drawn to the Life, you shall find him by his qualities to be no other than a Cozening Knave.

In the mean time their supposed Devil, *Ricardo*, was gotten beyond the length of their Churches, leaving them to lament their Losses; and now he was minded to return the next day to his Master, and to that end went directly to the Farmers where he had left his Horse; But a new trouble appeared unto him, for he had no Money to pay for his Horse-keeping; but that difficulty was soon over, for passing by a Usurer's House, he heard Money clattering on the Table, and the Door being open, putting on his *Invisible-Ring*, he went in, where a Poor Man who



who had borrowed Ten Pounds of this Usurer, was now come to pay it; which being told, and the Bond Cancel'd, the Usurer put it up in a Bag of his own, all which *Ricardo* Eyed very narrowly, and no sooner had he laid it on the Table but *Ricardo* as soon took it away. The Usurer, whose Eye like his Heart was always on his Money, seeing his Bag to creep away so insensibly, was quite confounded with Amazement, as it would move a Dog to see a Pudding stir, and began to call upon him: who before was seldom in his thoughts, fearing the Devil, whom he Judged to have drawn away his Bag, would next come for him; and therefore vowed a Reformation of his Course of Life; That he would never more take the Rigour of a Forfeiture as soon as the day was past, nor under Colour of Bonds Writing and Procuration, make the Borrower pay at least Ten or Twelve Shillings in the Hundred; Nay rather than fail, to be preserv'd from this Danger, he would build an Alms-House to maintain them who had been Ruin'd by his Extortion.

Now you will say it had been good Hanging this Usurer whilst he was in this humour, lest he should be of the same Mind with a Master of a Ship, who in a great extremity of Danger, promised our *Lady* to offer at her Altar, a Candle as great as the main Mast of his Ship; And when one of his Mates jogging him, told him he had promised an impossibility; *Tush Fool* (said he) *we must speak to her fair in time of need; but if ever I come ashore, I will make her be content with a Candle of six to the Pound.* But *Ricardo* was somewhat more Consciencious in his doings, for being got safe out of the Usurers House, he put some of the Money in his Pocket, and waiting for the poor Man's return, gave him the rest, bidding him to be a good Husband with it, and pray for the Squire of the *Invisible-Ring* for his good Fortune. And so leaving the Poor Man over-joy'd, he went towards the Farmers, when passing through a Meddow, he saw a Maid Milking of a Cow, who was sweetly singing forth this Song.

*When first on Love I cast my wanton thoughts,  
But yet not minding him for to obey,  
For freedom sure I thought was better oughts,  
Than serving him his Servitors doth slay.  
For what to Hungry Lovers is relief,  
But Sorrow, Anguish, Discontent and Grief.*

*But yet my mind is not so fully set  
(For Maidens minds are subject unto change,)  
But if I could a faithful Servant get,  
Whose Love would not be subject for to range,  
I soon to Love should yield a due subjection,  
And be should Master be of my Affection.*

*For Maidens Hearts they are not like to steal,  
Obdurate, hard, will no Impression take,  
But tender, soft, when Cupid's Darts they feel,  
Which in their Hearts will soon Impression make,  
No Fort so strong but may be won at last,  
No Mind so fixt but it may change as fast.*

*Ricardo* stood amaz'd at the ravishing Harmony of her Voice, comparing it to the Melody of the Thracian Poet *Orpheus*, when by his Songs he attracted Beasts, Trees, and Stones to follow him; or rather to the Harmony of the Seraphick Choires; wishing himself all Ear to listen to her Song, the pleasingness whereof so insensibly crept into his Heart, that he became a Thrawl unto her; But first he began to consider whether Squire Errants might have their Mistresses as well as Knights; and many weighty Arguments *pro* and *Con* passed in his thoughts; but Love so over-swayed them all, that he became solely captivated to her Affections, and therefore was she no sooner risen from Milking her Cow, but he accosted her on this manner.

*Most beautiful Mistress, the attracting Harmony of your Angelical Voice hath so captivated my Heart, that I am become a Sworn Servant to your Vertues, and therefore among all the Days of my Life, I must account this the Happiest wherein I had the Honour first to see you; Nor think you have met with an ordinary person which seeks thus to gain an Interest in your Graces; for know I am no less than a Squire-Errant to that Renowned Knight at Arms, the invincible and Victorious Sir Billy of Billerecay, whose Fame begins to sound all the World over, and whose History is to be Writ with a brazen Pen, and enroled in the Book of Fame; Let me intreat you therefore to accept of me for your Servant, by which you may come to be as Famous as Dulcinea my Masters Lady, and in process of Time the Wife to a Governour of an Island.*

The poor Maid who had never before been acquainted with any Love-Rhetoric above that of a Ballad, or in the Plough-Mans dialect, *Vaish Jone I Love thee*; stared upon him as one stricken into a sudden amazement; at last she said to him; *Pray Sir do not use such hard Words, you scare my Cows, and spoil my milking.* *Ricardo* finding he was not rightly understood, went towards her, thinking to Salute her; but the Wench as nimbly avoided him, threatening to cry out if he approached any nigher to her; whereupon slipping on his *Invisible-Ring*, he thought to gain his purpose that way! The Wench seeing him so vanish on a sudden, and feeling such smattering about her lips, without perceiving any thing, threw down her Milk-pail, and ran homewards as fast as her legs could carry her, so that on a sudden she was gotten out of *Ricardo's* sight, who seeing her fled, thought it in vain to pursue her, but went on in his intended Journey, until he came to the Farmers.

Now so it was that this Maid whom he had so Courted was the Farmers Daughter, who seeing *Ricardo* coming, squeaked out as if at the sight of some Spirit or Hob-goblin; having before declared how she was served a Milking, and now crying out, *This, this is the Devil that haunted me.* But the Farmer himself knowing *Ricardo*, perswaded her to the contrary, telling her it was the Man that had left his Horse with him. And so entering into the House, after some discourse, *Ricardo* told the Farmer of the affection he bore to his Daughter, and the better to gain his good will, how he was the Squire to a Knight Errant, who Conquered Kingdoms at his Pleasure, and how himself should be a Governour of an Island at least; and for that which had befall his Daughter, it was only things done by Inchantment, to which Knights Errant and their Squires are very Subject.



The Old Farmer wondered at his words, taking him now for another manner of Man than at first he judged him to be, and therefore freely gave him his Consent, as over-joy'd to have the Governour of an Island for his Son-in-Law; but when this was motion'd to the Daughter, she look'd on it with as much disdain as *Penelope* Court'd by the Beggarly *Irish*. Now by my *Perkins* (quoth she) for ought I know, this Squire Errant may be no better than the Knave of Clubs to the King and Queen of Hearts, and therefore let his Master Conquer Kingdoms and Islands for who-so-ever he will, but this skip-jack, this Hocus Pocus shall never be any Husband of mine.

This answer was something a cooling Card to *Ricardo*, but comforting himself, upon her Fathers words, he thought that time might alter her mind, and for the present he knew not what to do with a Wife if he had her. He therefore resolv'd she should be his Mistress, and to bear the Name of *Dowzabella*, which Name he promised to make as Famous by his Acts as that of *Sabra* the beloved Mistress of St. George, or *Philotheta* the Lady of Montelion, Knight of the Oracle. Away you Fool, said the Wench, and spare your strength to throw a Cudgel at a Pare-Tree, or your Activity in being the best Man at a match at Foot-Ball; and meddle not with a Sword as a Weapon out of your element, but betake you to a flail as most fit for your Employment.

My dearest *Dowzabella* (said *Ricardo*) be not so cruel to me in thy expressions. Hey day (said the Wench) what have we here; I was Christened Mary, and they call me Moll, and must I now be named *Dowzabella*? Now I wish that for your Pains (if any one will be so mad as to Marry ye) that your Wife from a Squire-Errant, will advance ye to be Knight of the Forked Order; And so Sir the way lies plain for you to be gone, for your Room will be more acceptable to me by far than your Company.

*Ricardo* hearing these Words, thought it in vain to stay any longer there, and therefore paying the Farmer for keeping his Horse, desiring *Dowzabella* to retain a better Opinion of him, he mounted his Steed and returned towards his Master.

#### C H A P. 8.

How *Ricardo* delivered his message to his Master, and of the Challenge made by Sir Billy against all comers, in Honour of his Mistress *Dulcina*.

SIR Billy had waited with great impatience the coming of his Squire, desirous to know how his Letter was entertained by his Mistress *Dulcina*, as also wanting his Company in pursuance of more Adventures, when to his great Satisfaction his Squire arrived, with the Joyful Tydings of the kind reception he had of that peerless piece of Beauty as he stiled her, Aggravating her perfections to such a height, as if she had been changed from a Blowze to an Angelical Feature since Sir Billy saw her. And to compleat his Joy the more he delivered him the Letter from her, which having received how often did he read, and read again the Supercription of it, it being directed to that Puissant and Magnanimous Knight at Arms, the most redoubted Sir Billy of Billerecay; but when he had read the contents therein contained, he was so transported with an Extasy of Joy, as if he had been placed in the Apogean or Zenith of all happiness. And can it be possible (said he) that

my Lady *Dulcinea* takes such Notice of the Actions of her Knight? has Fames Trumpet already blown my praise unto her Ears? What then will it be when I shall have performed such Acts worthy to be Eterniz'd in Fames eternal Bead-Roll.

As he was thus applauding his own supposed happiness, his Host the Sage *Freston* came in, who seeing *Ricardo*, welcomed him with great demonstrations of Love, inquiring after the welfare of his Lady *Dulcinea*, and how he sped in his Message unto her; to all which *Ricardo* gave very plausible answers, according to what he thought would best please his Master. When (said he) I first came to that Idea of Beauty, she was sweetly breaking the yielding Air with her Harmonious voice, which so sweetly she breathed forth, as was able to make the Rocks to dance, and furlly Beasts stand attentive to hear her; the whilst her white hands (in whose comparison all whites are Ink) was sewing with a Needle, which with so pretty a manner made his passage too and fro thorough the Cloth, as if it were loth to have gone from such a Mistress, but that it hoped to return thitherward very quickly again. Thus did her Voice and Hands keep pace in an equal proportion, as if her hands were won by the Attraction of her Voice to work, or her Voice were taught to Sing by the Harmonious consort of her hands. But when this Mirror of Beauty did cast an Eye upon me, and with what a due Reverence I approached to deliver my message unto her, she left off Singing, and with such a smile as *Venus* the Queen of Beauty gave to *Anchises*, she received the Letter from me, being impatient till she had read the Contents thereof, which both by her words and looks I found to be very satisfactory unto her. But *Ricardo*, said the Sage *Freston*, you have not as yet told us what Song your Lady or Mistress was then singing when you came unto her? O that said he, can I well Remember, for I have seen it in a Ballad glewed upon many an Ale-house wall, and it begins thus.

*When as King Henry rul'd this Land,  
The Second of that Name,  
Besides his Queen he dearly Lov'd,  
A fair and Princely Dame, &c.*

Indeed said the Sage *Freston*, I guess it was either that or the Ballad of *Chevy-Chase*, as consisting the one of Love, the other of War, being both Concomitants of Knight Errantry. Now by the Honour of my Knighthood (said Sir Billy) I question not but in time to perform such Acts as shall surpass e'er a *Percy* or *Douglas* of them all, and make Work for all the Ballad makers that shall live in succeeding Ages, when they have once read the History that shall be written of my Life; And therefore *Ricardo* let it be your Care to provide for our sudden departure, since Knights Errant were not born to sleep out their time in the Beds of Ease, but to be still seeking out for Adventures, as Men made all of Fire, of such undaunted high erected Spirits, as to make the Dead quake in their Graves to think of them.

*Ricardo*, who was always more addicted to feeding than fighting, as one who had indented with the Grave to bring all his Limbs thither, and not to lose one Joynt of them by Quarrelling; liked not at all of this proposal, having found better Entertainment from the Gentleman than he could expect from his Master; yet



yet trusting to the vertue of his *Invisible Ring*, by which he questioned not but to help himself in all his extremities, he freely condescended unto it. But the Sage *Freston* desirous to see what was contained in *Jone Grumball's* Letter, thus spake to Sir Billy. *I make no question most Heroick Knight, but the Lady of your affections, who is so much Honour'd in having such a Servant, has so pleased your expectation in her most gracious Answer, as hath given you satisfaction in her Love and Loyalty unto you; and were it not an high presumption in me to beg such a boon, I should think my self happy in the perusal of such lines as must needs fall from such a mellifluous Pen.*

*I were very unworthy, said Sir Billy, of such transcendent Favours I have received from you, should I deny you such a small request; and thereupon he shewed him her Letter; which when the Sage Freston had read, as it were in admiration, he brake forth into these expressions. O the excellency of Natural Wit! the Magazine of Eloquence! rich Soul of Language, a tenth Muse, whom all the Muses Court; the whole Monopoly of Wit, a branch of Minerva's Olive, well worthy the Affections of the most Heroick Knight in the whole World; How happy art thou Sir Billy in the Choice of such a Mistress, whose parts are so transcendent, she may well be stiled the epitomy of all Perfections.*

Sir Billy was not a little proud of his Ladies praises, verily conceiting her to be such a one as the Sage *Freston* had painted her forth, the Wonder of Nature, and Quintessence of perfection; saying, he would have a Solemn *Justs* proclaimed in the next Prince's Court he came at, wherein by the strength of his *Invincible Arm* he would maintain his Lady *Dulcina* to be the *Phanix* of Beauty, and the *Non-parelia* of this Age: and accordingly gave order to be gone the next Morning, but that Ricardo stayd his Journey by a new devised Trick, which he brought to pass in this manner.

Sir Billy used every Evening to walk in the Garden, with his hands indented one with another, as melancholy as a *Gyb'd Cat*, his Thoughts of Chevalry being made so habitual to him, as it was now become part of his Nature; In this posture as he was walking, his trusty Squire slipping on his *Invisible-Ring*, saluted him with a Crab-Tree Cudgel overthwart his shoulders, laying it on so lustily that Sir Billy thought himself engaged in one of those imaginary fights which he had read in his Books of Knight-Errantry, and drawing his Sword began to strike, but knew not at what, at last he heard a Voice which spake to him in this manner.

*Sir Knight before thou dost depart,  
From forth the place where as thou art,  
Thou must maintain thy Ladies Fame,  
'Gainst any shall oppose the same;  
Which if thou dost refuse, then know,  
Thou shalt receive full many a blow.*

Sir Billy hearing a voice, but seeing no Body, might have thought it an illusion, but that the blows which he felt assured him the contrary; wherefore to avoid receiving any more, he thus said, *whosoever thou art that thus speakest unto me, know thy mind shall be fulfilled; But let me desire to know from whence this message came, that when I have finished the Adventure, I may know by whose appointment*

*Undertook it.* To whom the voice answered, *I am a Spirit sent from the wise Urganda the Lady of the Woods, to warn thee not to stir whilst thou hast performed my Command, else shall I haunt thee with revenge whithersoever thou goest.* And having thus said, he withdrew himself without the Garden Gate, and slipping off his *Invisible-Ring*, came walking towards his Master, who with great earnestness told him of this Adventure, and to both of them together went to the Sage *Freston*, and acquainted him with it, wherefore it was agreed on all sides that a Challenge should be written, and Messengers sent abroad into all parts to publish the same; which Challenge Sir Billy himself would needs endite, which he did in these words.

*Whereas the renowned Knight at Arms Sir Billy of Billerecay, bath by the Command of the wise Urganda the Lady of the Woods, taken upon him to Justifie and Maintain his Lady Dulcina to be the Paragon of Beauty above all others. These are to certifie that the said Sir Billy is ready by force of Arms to maintain the same, at the Castle of the Sage Freston, against any that shall oppose it, either by Jufts, Turnament, or any other Martial Exercise belonging to Knight Errantry.*

*Signed Sir Billy.*

Eight days after was the time appointed when those Martial Exercises should be performed, in the mean time Messengers were sent abroad to publish the same in all the Towns thereabouts, which caused much Wondring amongst many people, who this Sage *Freston* should be, and of Jufts, and Turnaments, which few could remember ever to have heard of, but the Messengers soon resolved the Riddle, informing them of the mad Whimzies of Sir Billy, and how all was intended by their Master for sport and divertisement, whereupon many Gentlemen thereabouts promised to come, and to bring some of their Servants accoutred like Knights Errant, to Encounter with Sir Billy, but how they sped in their enterprize you shall hear in the next Chapter.

#### C H A P. 9.

*How Sir Billy was forced to run from his Challenge, the Mirth Ricardo had at a Wedding, what a Trick he served an Old Pornicator, and how he went in pursuit of his Master.*

**A**Mongst other places whether the Fame of this Challenge did spread, was the Town of *Billerecay*, wherein dwelt *Thomasio* the Father of Sir Billy, who hearing of his Sons challenge, resolved to encounter him with a Justices Warrant for the recovery of his two Horses, and if it were possible to change his Son from a Knight Errant to a Plough-Man again, and withal threatening to have *Ricardo* severely punished; to which purpose he easily obtained a Warrant of the same Justice from whom *Ricardo* before had taken away the Bottle of Wine. And being thus armed with better Authority than his Son had for his Knight-Errantry, he took his way directly to the Sage *Frestons*, where he had taken Sir Billy Napping, had not *Ricardo* by chance heard of his coming: for *Thomasio* whom Age had brought to the downfal of his mellow Years, being, as most Old Men are, very Tuchy and Cholerick, could not forbear to give out threatening Words



Words what he would do unto them, before he had gotten his prey into his hand Wherefore Ricardo having notice of his intent, was minded to frustrate his expectation, and giving his Master Billy notice thereof, he speedily packed him away, himself staying behind to see what would be the event thereof, not doubting when the worst came, to come off well enough by the help of his *Invisible-Ring*.

And indeed he quickly found himself to have need of such help, for *Thomasio* finding his Son Billy to have escaped his hands, resolved Ricardo should pay for all, and so by vertue of his Warrant seized upon him, threatening him with so many punishments, and such diversity of Torments, that if words would have done it, Ricardo had dyed a Thousand Deaths: In this passion he was hurried before the Sage *Freston*, who (as we told you before,) was Justice of those parts; to whom *Thomasio* made a grievous complaint, how that Ricardo was both a Thief and a Conjurer, that he had stolen his Horses, and intic'd away his Son, and for ought he knew made him away, and therefore desired he might be severely punished: But Sir (said he) if you have not a care he will escape your hands, for he hath learned Hocus-pocus tricks during his Knight Rascality, by which he can make himself and Bottles of Wine to become Invisible, as he served our Justice not long ago; and therefore I do accuse him for a Witch, and that as a Witch he may be burnt to death at a stake.

To this Ricardo answered, that he had done nothing but what was warrantable by the Laws of Knight-Errantry according as his Master had informed him; for (said he) did you ever read in any Books of Chivalry that Knights-Errant and their Squires went about to seek out Adventures on Foot? and therefore since his Master must have Horses, who could furnish him better than his Father? Nor are we (said he) to be troubled or molested for whatsoever we do, since Knights-Errant are Lawless, and if the Knights be Lawless, by consequence the Squires are Lawless too.

Ricardo's words made the whole Company to laugh; when in the very nick of time came the Justice of *Billerecay*, from whom Ricardo had taken the Bottle of Wine, invited thither by the Fame of Sir Billy's Challenge; Ricardo seeing him come, thought it was time to be gone, thinking he would disclose the Trick he had shown him, which indeed he quickly did in all its circumstances; but the strangeness of the thing could gain no Credence with the Sage *Freston*, who said he would try if he could serve him such a Trick; and thereupon commanded three or four Bottles of Sack to be fetched and set on the Table; Ricardo seeing and hearing all what was done, thought it now high time to act his part, and thereupon slipping on his Ring, he seized upon two of the Bottles, and clapping them under his Coat, marched cleverly away with them, to the Astonishment of all there present, especially to the Sage *Freston*, who now began to think that Ricardo and his Master, instead of two simple Fellows were a couple of crafty Knaves.

But notwithstanding Ricardo went away laughing with his Booty, yet was his heart sorrowful, as dreading what would be the effects of that which they had done; for though he put great confidence in his *Invisible-Ring* as a sure protection for him in all his extremities, yet hearing how vehemently Old *Thomasio*

*Thomas* had accused him for Witchcraft, and that if he should be taken unawares, before he could put the *Ring* on his Finger, it might be taken from him, and all his forepassed actions laid to his Charge; which last he had committed he thought would be none of the least, in abusing him by whom they had been so kindly entertained; for now he perceived that notwithstanding all his Masters brags of Conquering Castles and Islands, the purchase they were likeliest to get was only a Jayle. He therefore resolved not to expose himself to any danger more than needs must, and to that purpose kept the *Ring* on his Finger until he travelled many Miles, whereby he prevented his being taken by those which the Sage *Freston* had sent after him. For these two Justices after his departure, seeing how they were deluded, had sent both Horse and Man to take him; some of which *Ricardo* saw pass by him, enquiring of every one they met after such a person; When a new project came into *Ricardo*'s Head to make them leave off their pursuit, which was this.

He gets behind an Oak, and making an hideous noise, as it were the croaking of Ravens, bellowing of Bulls, and braying of Asses mixt together, which made them all stand still as amaz'd at what they heard; and having gotten them so together, with a loud bellowing voice thus he said.

*I am the Oak which the ancients of Old Consecrated to Jupiter, in whose Name I straitly charge ye to pursue no further after Ricardo Squire to the Invincible Knight at Arms Sir Billy of Billerecay, seeing he is one whom we have taken into our safe Protection, and whosoever shall offer him the least Injury, we shall be severely revenged on him.*

The messengers hearing such a hideous Voice, and seeing no person, notwithstanding they rounded the Oak Tree twice or thrice about, were wonderfully amazed, not knowing what to do; and there being never a Knight-Errant amongst them (which fear no danger, but are fool-hardy in all attempts) they thereupon concluded to return home, as being sufficiently warranted, by the voice which they heard, which when *Ricardo* saw, he laughed heartily to himself at those Sons of fear, as men who were afraid of the Swords which themselves wore, and affrighted at the clashing of their own Armor.

The messengers thus returning homewards with a Heeveless excuse of a fruitless Arrand, *Ricardo* passed on his way, but still diversity of thoughts perplexed his mind, what Course of Life to take; whether to seek out his Master *Billy* and pursue Squire Errantry, or to live by the shifts of his *Invisible-Ring*, at last he resolved with himself to go to his Master, knowing his Necessities to be so great, that without his help he was not able to support them, having left behind him both his Horse and Armor, by which he appeared (at least in show) not like a Knight Errant, and therefore neither he nor his Squire acceptable to those places whether they should come.

Now as he travelled along (often taking a sup of the Bottle to cheer his heart) he overtook a Fidler who was going to play at a Wedding at the next Village, with whom *Ricardo* consoled, and to endear his Company the more, as they went, sitting down under an aged Oak, whose spreading boughs sheltered them from the heat of *Sols* burning rayes, which with his orient tresses cast a radiant lustre over the World, there they emptied the remainder

of



of the two Bottles; and now having their Spirits heightened with the generous Wine, they went Merrily on, till they came to the House where the Wedding was kept.

Here the Bridegroom and Bride entertained Ricardo right heartily, and a great Company being met together, there was Fiddling, Dancing, Singing, Kissing and Playing, which so delighted the Heart of Ricardo, that now he forgot both the affrightment of the Justice Preston, and also the necessity which his Master Billy might be in, for the Amorous smiles, and Odoriferous Kisses of those Country Wenches, were such enticing Charms on Ricardo, that he thought himself in *Elizabeth* being in their Company. And now the Nuptial Couple were going to Church, to give that Knot with their Tongues which afterwards they could not untie with their Teeth, having the Fiddlers playing before them, and all the way thronged with Ropes, though afterwards Needles might more properly serve the turn.

Now in most parts of *Essex* (where this Wedding was kept) it is a common Custom when Poor People Marry, to make a kind of a *Dog-Hanging*, or Money-gathering, which they call a *Wedding-Dinner*, to which they invite Tag and Rag, all that will come, where after Dinner upon Summons of the Fiddler, who setteth forth his voice like a Town-Crier, a Table being set forth, and the Bride set simpering at the upper end of it; the Bridegroom standing by with a White Sheet overthwart his shoulders, as if he did penance for the Folly he had committed that day; while the people invited to it, like the Soldiers of a Country-Train-Band, March up to the Bride, present (their Money) and Wheel about.

After this offering is over, there is a pair of Gloves laid on the Table, most monstrously bedaubed about with Ribben, which by way of Auction is set to Sale at who gives most, and he whose flap is for to have them, shall withal have a Kiss of the Bride, which many times is not much worth, because her breath is not so sweet scented as her Gloves.

Ricardo who had some Money still left of that which he had taken from the Usurer, was very liberal at this Wedding, and very beautiful amongst the Maids of his Kisses, two things which endeared him very much to their Company. And now the juice of the Malt began to work in their Crowns, and every Coridon had selected his Lais to conferr with; Amongst the rest an ancient Barchellor, whose Head was covered with an Hoary Fleece, and whom one would have thought to have had nothing but Ice in his veins, and earth in his Veins, had gotten in his Arms a brisk Maid, as youthful as the early day, flugging and kissing her, as if he meant to make a perpetual feast of her lips. Ricardo beheld this with an envious Eye, and thinking it unequal that *January* and *May* should so twine together, he resolv'd to hinder their Conjunction, and to that end having put on his Invisible-Ring, sat down close by them to hear their discourse, where unperceiv'd he could here the Old Letcher make great assertions of his affection to her, colouring all under the notion of Love, although his thoughts were as lustful and as libidinous as a Goat. The Wench a crafty Baggage, one well skill'd in *Parasitic* School, seem'd with some Coy words to push him away from her, and then with a flattering smile to allure him again. He seeing his words not prevalent enough to

batter the Fort of her supposed Chastity, gave her Golden promises, remembering what he had read in the Poet.

*Nor less may Jupiter to Gold ascribe,  
For when he took a himself was a Bribe,  
Who can blame Neptune or the Brazen Tower,  
That they withstood not the Almighty Shower,  
Neer till then did I see make Jove put on,  
A form more bright and noble than his own.*

O the powerful oratory of a Golden Tongue, his gifts prevails with the Damsel, she consents so it may be done privately; So ends *mercant*, a fit place they agree upon; and he being hot upon the spur will admit of no delay. *Ricardo* heard all their discourse, and followed them as close as the shadow doth the Sun, until they came to the place appointed; And now a new party began betwixt them, for the Wench before having had false dealings before, would do nothing without Money in hand, with that the old Lecher told her out twenty Shillings being the price agreed on betwixt them, which the Wench very wary in her bargaining, would likewise tell over if it were right; which whilst she was doing, *Ricardo* laid hold of it, and snatching it out of her hands bellowed forth these Words.

*Thou Rogue and Whore must go with me,  
Away to London presently.*

These words struck them into a panick fear, so that instead of an Amorous heat, a chilling sweat over-run their trembling Joynts, and a sudden amazement made their Hair to stand an end; whereupon they betook them to their Heels, and fear adding Wings to their Feet, in an instant they were out of sight. *Ricardo* was well pleased with their flight, he leaving behind him his Cloak, and the her Scarf, besides the Money he had gotten before, so that now he thought himself well satisfied for what he had spent at the Wedding, besides the pleasure he had in spending his Money; whereupon he resolved to proceed on in his journey; where how he found his Master, and what befel Sir Billy after his parting from him, shall be declared in the next Chapter.

#### CHAP. 10.

*Sir Billy's encounter with a Dragon in the Ropes, how he was carried before a Justice of the Peace, and set free by Ricardo by the help of his Invisible-Ring.*

**S**IR Billy, after he had parted from *Ricardo*, was in a very bad condition, for Money he had none, without which it is but bad Travelling either amongst Friends or Foes; and though he had read that Knights Errant never carried any Money about them, but that they were to be entertained gratis where-ever they came, yet it troubled him not a little that he was equipped neither like a Knight nor Squire, having left both his Horse and Armour behind him at the Sage *Prestons*, yet had he still his trusty Sword *Rosire*, which sword he prized at a very high rate, as that wherewith he was to obtain all his future Conquests. In this disconsolate posture he marched along both weary and hungry, until such time as night with his black shade began to shut in the day, and *Phobus* with his Golden locks went to rest himself upon the pillow of fair *Theris* Bed, when to his comfort he came



to a sumptuous Inn, adorned with a most stately Sign, which he, according to the Fantasies of Knight Errantry that always ruled his mind, took to be a Castle for the relief of thole of his profession, into which he boldly entred, and meeting with the Host, who for his hall was biggish, he commanded an Host of men, encounter'd him in this manner.

A most worthy Governour of this Famous Castle, know that I am one who for the good of my Country have devoted myself to the exercise of Arms, for the relief of distressed Knights and Ladies, which Honourable intentions may have almost bent the force of my reason, by employing the help of such Foolish Antient and New Romancers to hinder their designs, of which my self am an example, who by the malice of a wicked Magician am deprived of my Horse and Armour, as also of the Company of my trusty Squire Ricardo, than whom never had Knight Errant a more trusty Servant; therefore according to the Law of Arms I request entertainment in your Castle, as formerly Men of our profession used to have.

The Host being (as most of their profession are) a merry Man, hearing him talk so extravagantly, and having himself read some Books of Chevalry, whereby he the better understood what manner of Man he was, He therefore resolved to humor him in his follies, and by his means to draw Customers to his House, whereupon he returned him this answer.

Sir Knight Errant, for such at first sight I take you to be, by your full Dragon look; you are heartily welcome to my Castle, for I suppose you to be no less than either Son to Amadis de Gaul, Huon of Bordeaux, or the renowned Don Belianis of Greece, whose Heroick Acts have been Translated about throughout all the World by the Pens of most Famous Historians. And indeed right happily are ye come, for hard by is an Adventure to be performed, which if ye do achieve will eternize your Name, and make ye Famous to all posterity.

Perform it (said Sir Billy) and make ye no doubt of my performance? I tell ye if it were as difficult as the twelve Labours of Hercules, be it Monster, Giant, Dragon, or Fiend of Hell, I shall not fear to encounter with him. Now so it was that in another Inn of the Town, there was a Show of Wrestling or Dancing on the Ropes, which had gotten all the Custom from the other Hall, wherefore he thought by Sir Billy's Fool-hardiness to spoil his Spectator of Dancing, or at leastwise to make such diversionment as might gain Guests to resort to his House.

But Sir Billy Ricardo wanted a recruit, and therefore would admit of no further delay, but desired the Host to accompany him with some Victuals, and the next Morning early in the Day that time Phœbus began to appear in the East I will perform it for this Adventure; whereupon by the Hosts command some Victuals were set before him, on which he fed very heartily, and having refreshed himself desired of the Host to tell him the Nature of this Adventure? For (said he) Knights Errants are only to fight in a rightfull cause, and therefore if this Adventure be for the relief of the distressed, or for the vindicating of some wronged Ladies Honour, I shall perform it; But if the Cause be unjust, for the maintenance of wrong, and upholding of Tyranny, then are we forbidden by the Law of Arms to draw our Swords in their defence; therefore resolve me in this doubt, that I may employ my Manhood accordingly.

The Host hearing his speech, thought he would fit him for a story accordingly, and therefore replied in this manner.

Renowned and invincible Knight, defender of wrongs, and succorer of the oppressed; that you may be assured of the Success of your undertakings, know that near to this Castle there lived an ancient and respectable Knight called Sir Gratiola, who for the civility of his Old Age had only one Daughter named Praxida, a Lady of transcendent excellencies, in whom the Queen of Love might serve for a foyle; her Beauty such as was able to make the cold to turn the spit, and cleave his Club to make the Fire; and as chaste as the handmaid, and as pure as a picture cut in a glass, so that you might as soon tempt a Votary to Sin, or remove a Scythian rock, as blow a Fire into her chaste breast. The Fame of these her excellencies spread so far, that at length it came to the ears of a certain Magromancer named Oscanus, who knowing such Jewels were ready to be snatched by every person, resolved to ingross her to himself; but knowing his ill Nature to be such that her Father would never consent she should be his Wife, he therefore thought it in vain by fair means to see to obtain her; and knowing by his Devilish spells, and wicked Inchantments, that she used every Evening at such time as Phoebe was lining his Chariot in the glooming West, to walk in a Meadow near adjoining to this Castle, he sent thither a Spirit in the likeness of her Father, who by cunning insinuations and sly persuasions, inveighed her to walk into a Grove hard by, where he had placed some Armed Men, that by main force took her and brought her away with them unto the place of his abiding, where now he keeps her full sore against her will; and to amuse the people that none should attempt to rescue her, he by the help of a Magical Staff which he holds in his hands, seems to dance and fly in the Air; And 'tis said that by the Fates 'tis so decreed, that the Lady shall not be delivered until such time as some Valiant Knight to whom it is ordained to end all his Inchantments, shall by his Manhood overcome him, and tumble him down from an Inchanting Rope whereon he treads, whereby his Magical Arts shall have no power, and the Lady be delivered from her indurance.

Now by the Honour of my Knighthood, (said Sir Billy,) I shall not cease until I have pursued this wicked Magromancer, and put an end to his Devilish Inchantments, whereby the Lady may be delivered. You do very well in that, (said the Host,) for what greater favour can there be, than to succor those that are in distress, and to punish all such wicked doers that by Diabolical arts seek the harm and destruction of others.

Whereupon it was concluded, because Sir Billy was weary with Travelling, he should the next way go to bed. But all that Night he could take no rest for thinking of the Combat he should have the next day; And in these thoughts he continued till the Rosie Morning had drawn her Sable Curtains and let in the day, when rising from his Bed, he made himself ready, and the better to enable himself for fighting called for a Breakfast, which the Cook-Maid over-hearing, you Call (said she) with Authority, as if you were some great person, I wish you have Money to pay for that you have called for already. Discourteous Damsel, (said Sir Billy,) that knowest not what belongs to the Law of Arms, hast thou remained all this time in Ignorance, and knowest not that Knights Errant are privileged from paying any thing where-ever they come; when did ever the renowned Montelion, Sir Egge, or Pheander the Maiden Knight, carry any Money about them?



them? The Wench by his Discourse thought that either he was Lunatick, or that he had abus'd her in hard Words, and therefore was minded to have a Game at Scold with him, had not her Master interpos'd, bidding her get her about her Business, for at that instant came in three or four of his acquaintance, to whom he had imparted his design, who saluted Sir Billy with Words befitting a Man of his profession, especially one of them, who spake to him in this manner.

*Adoll puissant Knight, whose Warlike Acts have already fill'd Fames Golden Trumpet, and whose renowned deeds of Arms will hereafter be inscribed on ever-during leaves of Brass; We being informed by the renowned Governour of this Famous Castle, of your intentions to encounter with the Flying Negromancer, could do no less than come to congratulate and applaud this your so honourable undertaking, which may sufficiently evidence to the World the great need that Knight Errantry should be again revived, which too long hath lain sleeping in the Grave of Oblivion, to the great increase of Negromancers, Magicians, and Inchanters, which now uncontrolled do practice their Diabolical Arts.*

*I Swear (said Sir Billy) by the bloody Falshion of fiery Mars, that there is no Trade, Calling or Occupation, so good nor beneficial to Mankind as Knight Errantry; were it not for them how would Tyrants and Monsters overrun the World; Dragons, Satyrs, Lyons, and other ravenous Creatures depopulate whole Countries, had not St. George killed the burning Dragon in Egypt, how had that Country been destroyed, and had not he with the other six Champions of Christendom overcome Leoger Knight of the Black Castle, how would the Shepherd have been revenged of him for the Ravishment of his Daughter, and how would the King of Babylon at that time been freed from his Inchantment? How would Assassins and Negromancers work mischief in every place, were they not taken down by our invincible hands; as I intend (my Lady Dulcinea being propitious to me) to work with this wicked Inchanter to day, and to set the Lady Praxedis free from her Imprisonment.*

These last words were spoken with such a confident boldness, as if the work were already done, and instantly he would have gone about it, had they not persuaded him that the Inchanter appeared not so soon in the Morning, (for they were resolved not to let him go till the Rope-Dances had gotten a great concourse of people about him) and to that end one was appointed to bring them word when the time was fit for the purpose. In the mean space Sir Billy held them in a long discourse concerning the loss of his Armour, and how his Squire was separated from him, imputing it all to the malice of Magicians and Inchanters, who are evermore envious against Men of his profession. While they were thus talking, the Messenger gave them Notice, that there was a summons for him to come; wherefore they acquainted him that the Magician was now acting his freaks. *Then let me alone (said he) shew me but the place and the business is done;* asking them also if they would not go with him to see how he would undevel the Negromancer? who excused themselves with a pretence of fear; *Fear (said Sir Billy) is a passion wherewith Knights Errant are unacquainted; whose Hearts scorn Danger, and dive for honour into a Sea of Blood; therefore if you are afraid stay behind, for I am resolved not to shun any Danger wherein the honour of our Knight-hood is concerned.*

And

*The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerecay,*

And so being directed by a Boy which they sent with him, he went the next way to the Inn, where he soon spied his supposed Inchanter Vaulting on the Rope, with Jack-Pudding shewing Antick Tricks to make the people laugh; whereupon Sir Billy drawing his Sword, cryed out to them with a loud Voice, Come down you wicked Inchanters, Sons of the Devil, the ingredients of wickedness, that have contracted in a Soul the Body of all Mischiefs, you that have practised Villany from your Cradle, and from the dug suck mischief more than Milk; the Monopoly of Vice, and Hieroglyphick of all Ill. Come down I say, and deliver up the Lady Praxada, and submit your selves to the mercy of the Invincible Knight at Arms, Sir Billy of Billerecay; or I shall in an instant send your Souls to the burning Banks of Acheron, that flaming Torrent, where the sad Furies bathe their ugly Limbs, there to be tormented, and burn with everlasting Flames of stinking Pitch.

All the Spectators were extreamly amazed at Sir Billy's oration; some thought him to be a Mad-Man; others, that it was a device of the Dancing Master for the diversion of the Company, and amongst the rest Jack-Pudding was of the same Opinion, who to add to their Mirth turned up his Bum to Sir Billy, which so incensed our Knight Errant, that he gave him a prick on the Burtock with his Sword that made Jack to roar and bellow like a Bull. The Dancing-Master seeing that Sir Billy was in earnest, in a great fear leapt off the Rope, and with the fright fell flat along, which Sir Billy spying, leapt upon him, and setting the point of his Sword to his Breast, said, Yield thy self thou soul Inchanter, and deliver me the Key wherein thou hast imprisoned the Lady Praxada, or else I shall instantly send thy Soul to accompany those wicked Magicians and Necromancers which have formerly been put to Death by Knights Errant before me.

I know of no Keys (said the Dancing Master) nor have any thing in my Pocket save only a paper of Verses which was sent me by a Friend in praise of my profession. Let me see them (said Sir Billy) and that instantly, that I may know by what wicked Arts thou practisest thy Inchantments. I practise no Inchantments (quoth the Dancing-Master) and therefore take away thy Sword and thou shalt see what is in it. Whereupon the Company perswaded Sir Billy to let him alone whilst he had read what was written; which being granted, the Dancing-Master pulled it out of his Pocket, and it being read, contained as followeth.

Sir, hearing by your Trumpet your Ability  
In the performing rare feats of Agility,  
I thought I could no less do in Civility,  
Than give you praise for this your Doubtless;  
Which far (alas!) transcendeth my Debility,  
My weak, infirm, faint, impotent Fragility,  
And therefore I implore you in Humility,  
That as you are descended from Gentility,  
But not one whit ally'd unto Nobility,  
That you will Pardon this my Imbecility,  
Of which I hope there is a Possibility,  
Because that I in you find great Stability,  
That you will Pardon my Muscs Sterility;



*So wishing unto you a long Tranquility,  
And that your Calling may have great Utility  
To all Spectators and Friends Visibility.*

Sir Billy hearing such hard cramp words, would not believe but that they were plain Conjuring, and therefore Swore by the Bloody Falshion of Mars he would Cut off his Head, and would also have been as good as his word had not the people ran in and held his hands. In the mean time the Dancing-Master got away and sent for a Constable, whom when Sir Billy spy'd, he strived to get out of their hands, crying with a loud Voice, *Come all ye infernal Spiriss whatsoever, and with your Damned Magical Charms do your worst, I am prepared to encounter with ye all.* But the Constable a sturdy robustious Fellow, taking him by the Coller, struck up his heels, and disarming him of his Sword, said unto him, *Sir Errant Rascal, or Mad-brain'd Fool, what whimzey posselt thy Idle Coxcomb to make such a disturbance amongst the People; Thinkest thou Proud Princetocks to encounter with a Company, and yet not able to grapple with a single Person; If you know not how to use your Liberty, in playing such freaks, I shall bestow you in such a place where your whole employment shall be to pick straws.* And so would have had him the next way to the Cage, but understanding there was a Justice of the Peace in the Town, he thought it more Convenient to have his advice in the matter, and therefore was dragging Sir Billy thither, when in the intrim his Squire Ricardo, who (as we told you before) went in pursuit of his Master, coming that way, soon espyed them, and having understood by one of the Fellows the occasion of his so handling, he resolved to succor him out of their hands, and to that purpose putting on his Invisible-Ring he followed them to the Justice, to whom the Constable, the Dancing-Master, and especially Jack-Pudding made a grievous complaint, aggravating his offence in several circumstances, as that he had not only hindered him the taking much Money, but disabled both himself and his Man from further performances, the one by his fall, the other by the Wound which he had given him; besides the affrightment of the people, and breach of the King's Peace, in drawing his Naked Sword, and doing what in him lay to have mischief'd others.

Ricardo all this while stood by unpertev'd, but diligently marked what was done, and seeing the Constable to lay his Masters Sword on the Table, he snatch'd it up, and drawing it out of the Sheath, flourished it about his Head, which the Company seeing, it struck them into a sudden amazement to see a Sword so flaunt it about without ever a hand to guide it, so that fear adding Wings to their Feet, they ran as if Old Nick were behind them. Sir Billy was as much amazed as any of them, but that it might not be thought that Knights Errant were daunted for any thing, he stirred not a jot. And now the Coast being clear, Ricardo Counterfeiting his Voice, said to Sir Billy, *I am an Invisible Spirit sent from the wise Urganda, the Lady of the Woods, to deliver thee out of the hands of thy Enemies, therefore follow me and thou shalt be safe.* And with those words passed away, still flourishing the Sword about his Head, whom Sir Billy followed directly step by step, verily imagining he was succored by some divine power according as he had read in his Books of Knight Errantry, many of the people saw him as he went along, but durst not come near him their fear was so great, so that they pass'd clear away, none being so hardy to follow after them.

CHAP.

Ricardo going to recover his Masters Horse and Armor, after a very pleasant Adventure in an Inn, with other things which happened.

**R**icardo having brought his Master quite out of danger, let fall his Sword for Sir Billy to take up, and conveyed himself away by a Compals to meet him with his Invisible-Ring off, because his Master should not know by what means he was set free, nor yet the vertue of his Ring, which he was always resolved to keep secret to himself. Sir Billy wondred as much to see his Sword laid on the Ground before him without hands, and was at first in a quandary whether he should take it up or no; but being verily perswaded it was the will of the wise Urganda that he should shift for himself, he took it up and went his way, but he had not gone far, when Ricardo met him, who seeming to wonder much at their so accidental meeting, fell to embracing him, with many expressions of Joy for this their so happy rencounter, desiring his Master to tell him what Successes he had met with since their last parting.

My trusty Squire (said Sir Billy) I were not worthy to be thy Master should I deny thee so small a request; Know then that after such time I parted from thee, (occasioned by the unfortunate pursuit of my Father, by the malign influence of some Cross-grain'd Planet, or rather the hatred of wicked Spirits and Negromancers which they bear to Knights Errant,) wandering whether Fortune was pleas'd to guide me, I came to a certain Castle, where I heard of an Adventure of a flying Negromancer. And so related all had befallen him as you heard before; only imputing his Misfortunes to the Malice of Magicians and Inchanters, and how he was rescued from them by Urganda Lady of the Woods, with the Miraculous Brandishing of his Sword, and dropping before him.

Ricardo heard all with great seeming attention, and now began to counsel his Master, that seeing that Knight Errantry was attended with so many troubles and dangers to leave it off; but Sir Billy would by no means condescend thereunto; saying, That the immortal Honour attained by Arms, could not be purchased without much hazard and danger, the rugged Paths leading thereunto being altogether Paved with Perils; an Ounce of Honour costing a Pound of Blood. And therefore, (said Ricardo) since the purchase is so dear, far better it is to let it alone; what avails Honour in the Grave, nor will it without Money purchase the Belly full of Victuals.

Sir Billy was so incensed against Ricardo for these as he thought Cowardly expressions, that in a great rage he burst forth into this exclamation. O thou Dastardly Son of Fear, thou off spring of Clinias and Dametas, that wouldst sooner creep into a Scabbard than draw a Sword; that at the approach of danger, art ready to run away from thy self, like the Satyr that ran away at the Noise of the Horn which he himself blew; being ready to Sink at the very Name of Wounds and Scars, as if thou hadst indented with the Grave to bring all thy Limbs thither. Thinkest thou such a Cowardly passion and fear shall ever take possession of the least Limb about me? No, know that I am of such undaunted, high, crested Spirit, as may make the Dead Quake in their Grave to think of me; who if I should not live to enjoy the Honour purchased with my Blood, yet will I leave the World my Executor, to whom I will bequeath the rich inheritance of my Memory.

These



These thundring words made *Ricardo* to quake with astonishment, so that fearing to exasperate his Master any further, he condescended to accompany him in the pursuance of his Knightly adventures. But now their chiefest care was for the Recovery of their Old Horses, or else to be furnished with new. Sir *Billy* was of opinion that Knight Errantry would warrant them to take Horses in any place where they could find them; but *Ricardo* who valued his Life more than Sir *Billy* did his, and who of all Deaths dreaded that most of being Hang'd up in the Air like a Dog, was altogether against it. He therefore (trusting to the vertue of his *Invisible Ring*) told his Master, that if he would abscond himself for a little space, in some place where he might know to find him again, he would undertake through his Ingenuity, to help them to their Old Horses. *But how can this be done* (said Sir *Billy*;) *without force of Arms, and who is so proper for that as myself?* Did you ever read of any Squires Errant that took upon themselves adventures without the help of their Masters? *No*, as I am to participate of the purchase, so will I also of the peril in obtaining it.

But *Ricardo* would by no means yield to that, telling his Master, *That the way to get their Horses again must be accomplished by Policy, and not by force of Arms; and though he knew him to be as valiant as the Renowned Hercules, or the valerous Champion St. George for England, yet many times were things brought to pass by weak means, which the greatest Strength nor Manhood could do.*

*Billy* overcome by these reasons, condescended to stay behind in a place they agreed on, and *Ricardo* with much confidence went forward in his Journey, making all the hast he could to get to the place where he had left old *Thomas*, before he was gone away with the Horses; and such hast he made that he got thither by such time as bright *Phœbus* began to run his Chariot in the Glodring West; where after some small enquiry, he found he had taken up his Inn with an intent to be gone the next morning betimes. *Ricardo* who lov'd sport as well as Business, was resolv'd if possible to have some that Night; and thereupon putting on his *Invisible Ring*, entred the Inn, going from Room to Room to view each Company and hear their Discourse, which generally was of Sir *Billy's* strange escape, some saying one thing and others affirming another: but Old *Thomas* with Mouth full bore, said, *That it was none other than that young Rascal Ricardo, who since his rambling with my Son is turned an arrant Witch, and I am afraid has bewitcht my Son to take this Vagabond Course of Life he leads.*

*Ricardo* bearing these words, as he thought very Derogatory to an Esquire belonging to a Knight Errant, could forbear no longer, but as *Thomas* was bulie in inveighing against him, he gave him such a Chuck under the Chin, that he well near bit his Tongue asunder, which mad the Old Man to bellow like a Bull, not knowing whom to blame for his hurt, nor would the Company be perswaded otherwise but that it was only himself which did it, every one of them protesting they meddled not with him. *Ricardo* had much a-do to forbear laughing out right, but that he might not be heard, he passed on further, and in a by Corner he spyed a young Man and a Lass at close hug together, he hanging at her like a Padlock on a Pedlars Pack; whereupon he drew close to them, and by their discourse perceived they were two Servants in the House who had appointed a Friendly meeting that Night together, the time and place being both nominated, which *Ricardo* took special notice of, resolving to make one of their Company, and to that purpose searched about till he came to the Chamber which by their description was to be their meeting place. Here he staid expecting their Company, not minding to hide himself, as being secured by his *Invisible Ring*, nor indeed was there any need thereof, for presently after, had Night hid the Face of the Earth with her

Sable pinions, and the *Jolly Character* hurl'd her black Mantle o're the Hemisphere; whereupon those Guests who liv'd near repaired home, and old *Thomasio*, and the rest who lodged there, went to their Beds, the better to rise betimes the next Morning.

And now was the time come for the two Lovers to meet, which for their more security they did severally; and first the Wench, a long strapping Jade, come in as gingerly as if she trod on the points of Needles, or slippery Ice, who having stript her self, and got into the Bed, immediately followed her Mate, a stout lubberly Fellow, but brawney back't, sufficiently able to satisfy her appetite: He also pulling off his Cloaths, went to Bed to her; which *Ricardo* perceiving, and that their Cloaths lay apart from the Bed, he got them up under his Arm, and as softly as was possible, carried them out of the Room with him; and finding the Key in the Door with as much silence as a dark Night was capable of he locked it, and during all the while Household bathing their weary Temples in the dew of sleep, after he had let open the Street-Door for a free passage for himself to go out, he with a *Semorian* voice cryed out, Fire, Fire in the Maids Chamber: which so alarm'd the House, that in an instant they were all gotten to the Chamber-Door, which finding lockt, they rapt and bounced at it as Men who said we must and will come in. The two Lovers who were busie in their Amorous imbraces, hearing such a noise, were more amazed than *Circes* Prisoners when they felt themselves turned into Beasts; and searching for their Cloaths, when they could find none, were almost at their Wits end.

Those on the other side who were busie at the Door, hearing them not come to open it, thought they were smothered in the Fire, and at last with much ado broke open the Door: but seeing no Fire, nor any sign of Fire, they struck a light, and walked in, where searching narrowly, they found the two Lovers stark-naked under the Bed. This unexpected sight turned their fear into an exceeding laughter, but the two poor Lovers were so confounded with shame that they could not speak; imagining the Devil had been there himself in proper Person and fetch'd away their Cloaths. And now their Mistress who also had come running headlong in the fright, began to interrogate them, how and by what means they were there together, and where were their Cloaths? When the Wench looking wistly upon her, spied a Man's Hose on her Leg, which she knew to be a Gentleman's that oft frequented the House, and that Night was come thither; whereupon mistrusting that which indeed happened to be true, she started up of a sudden, and ran as fast as she could to her Mistress's Bed, into which she entered, and no sooner there but she found her self in the Gentleman's Arms who owed the Hose her Mistress had on: He thinking her to be his, and the Mistress of the House; But before he could ask her any questions what was the cause of this hurley burley, some of the people were come running after the Wench, and there found that the Mistress was equally concerned with the Maid. And now the Gentleman was as much abashed as the young Man before, not only to see himself taken in that manner, but also with one whom he esteemed a far greater disparagement than if it had been her Mistress; nor could he well tell, being acted in the dark, if this same were not his former Bedfellow, thinking her Mistress might put a trick upon him. The Mistress her self seeing things thus acted, slipped into another Room, and putting on some other Cloaths, appeared amongst them as one whose Soul sat enthroned with Spotless Innocence, and sought to persuade the standers by, that the Maid had only run thither to hide her self, deeply protesting (which she might easily do) that the Gentleman was as innocent as her self.

But now here was another question, how the Gentleman should come into the Mistress's Bed? Now old *Thomasio* who had also risen with the rest, alarm'd at the Noise of a Fire in the House, would needs persuade them, that all was done by Inchantment,



ment, telling them what had happened in his Town, as also what they had seen in their own, how his Son's Sword without help of Hands marched away of itself; The Mistress of the House believed him therein, thinking it must needs be so, else how could the Gentleman be brought into her Bed; but one of the Guests affirmed, that he thought it was rather the Charm of the Petticoat than any other Magical Charms.

Whilst they were thus arguing the case, Ricardo was as busie in ordering of the Cloaths he had brought out of the Chamber, which he fixed upon two poles, and having some glimmering light by the help of the Moon, he writ these Verses on a piece of Paper, and pin'd them to the Cloaths.

*To punish Lechery, and for no Theft,  
These Cloaths were took away, and here are left.*

By this time the Morning began to dawn, and the blooming light to blush from the East, the Sun by degrees gilding the Horizon with his radiance; whereupon Old Thomasio resolved not to go to his Bed again, but to prepare for his going home; and to that end went into the Stable, and bringing out his own and his Son's Horse, laid Sir Billy's Armor on the one, intending to ride on the other; and having fitted all things to his purpose, hung his Horses at the Door, when he went in to pay his Reckoning. Ricardo who stood by all this while undiscern'd, neglected not this opportunity, but untying the Horses, got up, and away he went with them as hard as he could drive.

Some of the Servants seeing the Horses thus to run away as they thought of themselves, told Thomasio what had happened, who with a Sorrowful Countenance looked after them, as who should take his last farewell of them. *Now the reverend light and that wicked Varlor (said he, wringing his hands, and tearing the little remainder of his Hair from off his Head) did not I tell you that what was done in this House to Night was done by Inchantment, and so by Inchantment are my Horses taken away; This is that incarnate Devil, that Devil in Hose and Doublet, Ricardo, the very abstract of all faults, the impostume of all corruption, and the perfection of all wickedness; It is he that hath stolen away my Horses, it is he that hath perswaded my Son to all this foolery of Knight Errantry, the Devil's Factor for all ungraciousness, and the very epitome of all evil.*

In the mean time Ricardo having gotten on Horse-Back, made as much hast as if he had been flying from Death, so that in short space he was gotten clean out of sight; nor did he much slacken his pace till he came where his Master was, who having spied him with the two Horses, he was ready to leap out of his skin for joy, being more glad than is the teeming Earth to see the long'd for Sun, or the tyred Sea-man to descry Land; *My frisky Squire (said Sir Billy) more welcome art thou unto me, than was the wandering Ulysses after his Ten Years Travels to the chaste Penelope; nay far more welcome than Health to the diseased Person, or drink unto the thirsty Soul. And thou my frisky Steed Bellerophon, never shalt thou move for any danger when I shall be parted from me, whom I will keep as close unto me, as gripe of Fist or lips of Lovers when they melt in Kisses.*

But Ricardo thinking himself not safe so near, desired his Master to mount his Horse and be going from thence; but Sir Billy would not stir till he had furnished his Armor, and finding his due order, he armed himself, and then bestriding Bellerophon, which he had not done in many a day before, he pranced on his back in as much state as the renowned Hector before the Walls of Ilium. So proceeding on their way, which according to the Nature of Knights Errant, is, *never out of their way*, they came to a Town where was a Fair kept that day, which Sir Billy Fancied to be the Camp of some Pagan Army, and therefore resolved to set upon them, and with his single prowess to overcome them; where how he sped in his attempt, you shall hear in the Chapter following.

Sir Billy's ill success in his adventure against the Pedlars: How he was reserved by Ricardo by the help of his Invisible-Ring: With other things that happened.

**S**IR Billy seeing before him so many Booths and Stalls, with a multitude of people amongst them, called to Ricardo, and said, *My most faithful Squire, partake with me in all my Troubles and Adventures; Now are we come to the brink of Honour, the inheritance of Fame, that great engagement to great purposes, which shall raise our Names from the black edicts of a Tyrant Grave. Know that this is the Camp of that wicked Monster, the cruel Pagan Prince Brontes, who with an Army of miscreant Soldiers wandreth about the World spoiling and destroying all wheresoever he comes; Now is the time come for my Victorious Arm to put a period to all his mischiefs; this is the allotted season to put an end to his damnable designs, and to raise a Pyramid of praise to my self by destroying such a brood of insolent Vermin. And therefore Ricardo stand thou still and be a Spectator of my valerous performances. And therewithal putting his Launce into his Rest, offer'd to run against the multitude; which Ricardo seeing, with a voice as loud as the bawling of the Oyster-Wives at Billingsgate, cryed unto him; Ah Wretch beest of Jence, seest thou that is not an Army of Pagans, but of Christian men, yea such very Christian Men as inhabit in our Parish; Itell thee missest Master of mine, it is a Fair, and such a Fair as is kept by Pedlars at our Town of Billerecay on the 22d day of July. But Sir Billy who imagined every thing to be as he had read in his Books of Knight Errantry, would hear no reason, but spurring Belerophon with winged hast rode to the Fair, and instantly overthrew two or three Pedlars stalls. Vile Miscreants (said Sir Billy) whose wickedness is such as makes the Earth groan to support your weight; to whom Murthers are but resolute acts, and Treasons matters of small consequence; Now shall my enraged Blood tickle it self with a pleasing revenge for satisfaction of your misdeeds; sending so many of your Souls to Pluto's grizzly habitation, as shall make Charon to sweat with waisting you over the Strygian River.*

The Pedlars who had been damnified by Sir Billy's adventure, hearing his terrible threatening words, and seeing the spoil he had already done, thought it was best to bestir themselves; and snatching up some poles, the broken remainders of their Stalls, they set upon Sir Billy on every side, some before, and some behind him, that at length they knockt down the Knight Errant, who lay streaking for Life under his Horses heels. Then began they to gather up their Wares, which confusedly lay strewed upon the Ground; Here a parcel of Jewes Trumps quite out of Tune, their Babies, Rattles, Tumblers, Boxes, all Trophies of Sir Billy's Manhood, who lay all this while in a Trance.

Whilst these things were a doing, Ricardo that he might see the end of his Master's adventure, having secured his Horse, slipped on his Invisible Ring, and following after, saw all what had berided him, which made him almost half out of Love with following any more the pursuit of Knight Errantry: Yet not to leave his Master in this distress, whilst the Pedlars were busie in gathering up their Goods, he went and pulled him from under his Horse's Feet, where he lay as senseless as was his undertaking the Adventure, with a broken head; and no doubt his brains had flown about had he had any in his Skull.

Ricardo having gotten his Master from under his Horses Feet, wrapped his own Cloak about him, and so carried him away Invisible, when returning to fetch his Horse, he found the Pedlars had seized on him, who having scrambled up their Goods for fear others as Knavish as he Foolish might filch some from them, not finding the Man any where, seized upon the Horse, resolving that should make good the damage they had sustained. Ricardo seeing what was done, and judging by it of their intent, resolved the



the Game should not go so, and having on his *Invisible Ring*, and a good Battoon in his hand, he struck the party with the same who had hold of the Horle, he feeling it smart, and not knowing from whence the blow came, with as much eagerness struck at another, and that other again at a fourth, so that in an instant, parts raking, six or seven of them were together by the ears. Whilst this Game at Handy-Fists was thus playing, Ricardo shifted away with the Horle, and they having soundly batter'd each other, and not knowing well why this quarrel was begun, began to have a breathing space, but then looking for the Horle from whence they all hoped for satisfaction, and finding him to be gone as well as his Master, they each of them thought the other had conveyed him away, whereby a new quarrel arose betwixt them, and from words again to blows more sharp and eager than before.

But the case was not so Tragical on their side, as it was on Ricardo's, who returning with the Horle to his Master, found him without sense or motion, as one inrolled in the register of death, and ready to cast off the robe of Clay, and drop into the Grave. Ricardo finding him in this condition, was almost at his wits end, nor knowing what to do, nor whether to have him, his Master by going about to redress wrongs, having committed so many, that scarce was any place late for them to resort to.

In this uncouth condition, as he was ruminating what to do, came by an Old Man with Grizly Hairs, one whose Fortunes were out at the heels, as his Cloaths were out at the Elbows, in sum, a Beggar, whose hourly wants made him wrudge from place to place for relief. He hearing Ricardo's complaint, and imagining his Master to have been one of the *High-Pad*, and therefore wanted a place to repose himself, told Ricardo that if he would go along with him, he would help him to a convenience answerable to his desire, a place which by the coverture of tall spreading Trees, was invisible to the Rayes of the Sun, and hid from the radiance of each sparkling Star. Ricardo entertained this motion as a voice from Heaven, and with many thankful words accepted of his proffer; so taking Sir Billy up on the Horle for fear of being persued, they hastened away, and by direction of the Old Man came to a place where Solitariness it self might be said to dwell, being situated in the midst of a Thicket of Trees, Quick-set-Hedges, and Bushes; here did they enter into a Cottage erected on purpose for the entertainment of Beggars, Mumpers, and such kind of people, where they freely spend the Goin they get in begging, having general rendezvouzes there at certain times of the Year. To this stately Mansion did they bring that Victorious Knight at Arms, Sir Billy of Billeracay, where having dismounted his Horle of him, they carried him to a Bed, who all this while lay as if his Soul were Eclipsed from his Body. Now Ricardo being solicitous for a Surgeon, his old Mumper who was skilful in making of Clymes, and raising blisters on legs to move people to compassion, and healing them again at his pleasure; he voluntarily undertook to be Sir Billy's Chyrurgion; and administering some small matter unto him, our Knight, as if new risen from some Trance, began to open his Eyes, and after two or three yawns, stretching out his legs, and fetching a deep sigh, he said, *Think not proud of me though you have unhorsed me, for to prevail: It is not all your Magical Charms that can daunt my Valour, or make me to repent my enterprize upon ye.* When looking aside, spying the Old Beggar, whom for distinction sake we will call Gerion. And thou cursed Prince Brontes (said he) who art the head of this mischievous rout, now shall thy wickedness return upon thine own head, and the punishment that I shall inflict upon thee be so terrible, that Babes unborn shall tremble at the recital of it.

Ricardo hearing his Master talk so Idlely, began assuredly to think that all his pretensions

pretensions to Knight Errantry, was but a meer feign'd thing, and that though he had entertain'd and feasted at some Gentlemens Houses, under the notion of such a Person, it was more to make Sport with him, than any reality that was in it; so thus his hopes of being Governour of some Famous Island, began to dwindle to a meer nothing; and hearing his Master to proceed in his extravagant discourse, he thus interrupted him. *I think (Sir Billy) all things considered, it had been better for you still to have been at home keeping your Fathers Sheep, and I in his Barn threshing of Corn, than wandring thus about the World like Vagabonds, seeking of impossibilities, and dreaming of finding Castles in the Air; for to no other end hath been all our attempts as yet, our only purchases having been Blows, Basting, and Bastinado's, instead of Crowns, Kingdoms, and Principalities.*

Sir Billy turning him on his side, as well as his bruised Body would give him leave; Friend Ricardo (said he) thou speakest as one ignorant in Arms, and therefore I shall the more bear with thee; Oh! if those worthy Knights, Sir Huon of Bourdeaux, Sir Amadis de Gaule, Sir Palmendis, Palmerin of England, Palmerin D'oliva, or those other renowned Heroes mentioned in Books of Knight Errantry were now alive, how would they laugh at thy Ignorance, what wouldst thou reap thy Harvest before thou Sowest thy Corn, gather thy Fruit before the Trees be grafted, drink the Wine e'er the Vine be planted? did not St. George suffer seven years imprisonment in a Dungeon in Persia, before he came to be King of Morocco and Egypt; what troubles did the Famous Chiron of England endure, before he obtained the Beautiful Cassiopia in Marriage? How many Crosses, Troubles and vexations, suffered the renowned Montelion Knight of the Oracle, before he enjoyed the Beautiful Lady Philotheta for his Wife? There is nothing to be obtained without much Trouble and Hazard; he that will Travel upon the Sea, must address himself to abide the Peril of every storm; he that will enjoy the sweet content of Felicity, must undergo all the hard haps of envious adversity; and he that will in this spacious World seek the Advantage of Honour, must look e'er he attain it to meet with many Misfortunes.

But those Men you spake of (said Ricardo) spend their time in killing of Gyants, Monsters, and Tyrants; whereas all your Encounters have been only against Scare-Crows, Poppet-Shows, and Pedlars, whereby you have received more Ignominy than Honour; And therefore my resolution is, that if henceforward you will not be rul'd from running your self into needless dangers, mistaking Inns for Castles, and Fairs for Armies, I shall resign up my Squire-Errant-ship, and leave you alone to the pursuance of your Follies.

Sir Billy was so angry with Ricardo at these words, that could he have come at him, there had been a mortal affray between the Knight and his Squire; but his bruises and Sores would not admit him to stir. Now whilst they were in this consternation, came in the Constable, attended with Four or five rusty Halberds, bringing with them a young lusty sturdy Rogue, who being taken in a notorious Thievery, upon promise of Favour had confessed all that he knew concerning this House, how it was the receptacle of their stolen Goods, and the rendezvous of them that stole them.

Upon that information, the Constable made a strict search thorow all the House, securing every one he found therein; but Sir Billy whose thoughts were holy taken up with what he had read in his Romantick Histories; seeing the Constable and his Guard, cryed out, Oh ye haters and tormenters of Knights Errant, ye off-spring of Pluto and Cerebus, always envious of the good of Mankind, may mischief and sorrow go along with ye, may hearts discontent, and Sore affliction be play-fellows to keep you Company; may Poyson be your drink, and Gall, nay worse than Gall, the dainties that ye taste. Think not ye wicked Negromancers, whose exercise is Murder and sullen Tragedies, think not (I say) with all your Sorceries and Charms to prevail against me, who am ordained by the



*the Fates to be a Scourge and plague to all such wicked Miscreants.*

These words listned to attentively by the Constable, made him to wonder what kind of Person this should be; and being told that he was a Knight Errant, *I have heard* (said he) *of Knights of the Garter, Knights of St. Michael, Knights of the Golden-Fleece, and several other sorts of Knights, but never of Knights-Errant, and therefore I rather take him for a Knight-vagrant, and as a Vagrant I apprehend him, till I know further from whence his Honour is derived.*

*Proud Magician* (said Sir Billy, who knowest not what belongs to true Honour, think not to escape my hands without Chastisement, *Mangle the power of the Stygian Prince thy Hell-bred Master, and all his infernal band of Devils.* The Constable hearing him rave in this manner, like a Bull stung by Hornets, or like one of *Bacchus* frantick raging Nuns, imagined him to be one who was scarce Master of his Wits, and therefore thought him to be an object of pity rather than of punishment; but casting his head aside; and seeing Sir Billy's Armor lie on a side Table, he thought them not things fitting for a Mad-Man to have in possession, and therefore bid one of his followers to take and secure them.

The Fellow no sooner commanded but was getting them up on his Back to carry them away; which Ricardo eyeing, slipped on his *Invisible-Ring*, and following after him, no sooner was he out of the Constable's sight, but he strikes up his heels, and giving him three or four buffets on the Face which almost dazeld him, he takes the Armor and throws it into a by place all but his Sword, which he draws, and brandishing it about his head, runs towards the Constable, who seeing it come directly against him, threw down his Staff, and betook him to his heels; his followers seeing their Captain thus to run, and the Sword to come brandishing towards them, were also ready to run away from themselves, like the Satyr that ran away at the Noise of the horn which he himself blew, and therefore casting away their weapons, ran after him for Company. Ricardo seeing the Coast clear, went back again towards the fellow from whom he had took the Armor, who by this time was come again to himself, but seeing also a Sword without hands flaunting it towards him, he roared out like a Town-Bull, and taking example by others; thought his Legs the surest defence, and so with hasty steps ran as it were from Death it self.

Ricardo could not but smile to see how his project took, and taking off his *Invisible-Ring*, returned to old Gerion the Beggar, who was as much amazed as the rest, and would have ran likewise if he could have done it to any place of safety. But as for Sir Billy who beheld all what had happened, he was nothing daunted, but rather more confirmed in this Romantick opinions; being verily perswaded that this help came from the wife *Urganda* for his deliverance, and that by her protection he should never fail in what he undertook. So calling to Ricardo, he said, *Seest thou not thou Nullifidian in Knight Errantry, what care the immortal powers do take of those that practice Chivalry; nor all the Charms nor Negromantick spells Magicians use, can do the least prejudice against a Knight Errant, and yet thou out of a Cowardly fear wouldst leave off this Honourable exercise, for what can be more honourable than a valiant mind, that knows not fear nor Death, Souls of that Fire, they'll catch a Bullet flying, scale a Wall battled with Enemies, stand breaches, laugh at the thunder of the Cannon, call it Musick fitter for a Ladies Chamber than the Field; and when over their heads the Element is darkned with darts fight under the shade of it, and ask no other Roof to hide their heads in; such Men are to be honoured as adventure upon such designs, that have no more probability than is enough to keep them from being impossible. And therefore I am resolved still to follow my first resolution in pursuance*

of Knight Errantry, that after age may read with admiration the deeds performed by my invincible Arm, and Babe's unborn speak of the Matchless achievements done by my Valour.

## CHAP. 13.

*The Woful story of a Taylor and his Sweet-Heart, how they were Hanged in a Barn; and how the Murderers were taken by the means of Sir Billy and a Constable.*

**R**icardo was not so attentive to his Master's discourse, as he was solicitous for his future safety; he was so fully persuaded that the Constable having gotten more aid, would return again afresh in pursuit of them, and then began to mistrust that Knight-Errantry would not protect them from the Constables Whip; so imparting his mind to old Gerion the Beggar, what he should do therein, was by him told of a more secret place, as free from search as it was from beholding the Sun-beams, to which it was never visible since first it was made a *Nashin* for the *Canting-Crew*. But Sir Billy by no means would be perswaded to remove, resolved he said to see the utmost of his Famous Adventure, which put Ricardo into a great consternation, not knowing what to do, for to tell him of danger, was but to cast Oyl into Fire, and made him more furious to stay, he therefore resolved to foot it up in his folly, and to catch his Burard in the Woodcocks springe; wherefore slipping on his *Invisible-Ring*, and clapping him on the shoulder, he uttered forth these Words:

*Sir Knight, whose Fame about is Hurl'd,  
Throng'd out the Universal World,  
Whose praises to the skies do Mount,  
And Babe's unborn shall it Recount;  
The wise Urganda doth by me,  
Command that thou from hence do Flee,  
Therefore make hast, use no delay,  
But wuh Ricardo pack away.*

Sir Billy hearing a voice and seeing no body, was verily perswaded this was some Messenger from the wise Urganda to have him depart, and therefore calling hastily to Ricardo, he said unto him, *My trusty Squire, I shall now condescend to thy request, in going away from this same place, having received a Command from the wise Urganda therefore, whose Words to me I esteem as Oracles; and whose Commands, as Laws unviolably to be observed.* Ricardo therefore making no delay, mounted his Master on *Bellerophon*, and taking old Gerion up behind him on his own Horse, away they marched, directed by the old Beggar, until such time as they were clear out of danger from all pursuers. It was then at such time of the day when the high pitch'd Sun invades the Earth with his hottest Beams, bearing an equal distance betwixt foregoing and ensuing light; The scorching Rayes of Heavens Charioteer bearing so hotly upon them, made them desirous to take shade under the Coverture of some leavy Canopy, when looking about for the fittest place, they spied an old Barn encompassed about so with Trees, as scarce discernable through their leavy branches.



Hither being come, they entred the same, which they had no sooner done, but there ran out thereof a lusty young Man with such swiftness, as if each step strived to overgo the other, so that he was soon vanished from their eyes, which attended him so long as he was discernable, wondering what should be the cause of this haste; when casting their eyes, they saw a Maid hanged on a beam, whose Soul had taken a final farewell of her body; and over her a young Man newly hang'd whose soul was ready to dislodge, and to sink into the House of Death; but Ricardo and old Gerion perceiving some motion in his Body gathered by thence, that he was not as yet quite rake'd up in death's cold embers; and therefore cutting the rope, they by chasing him, and some other means which they used, brought him to Life, and at last to such a degree of Life as to digest his thoughts in words, which the first he used were, to desire their help to take down that Maid, and see if any means might recover her, which yet he doubted was impossible; whereupon they cut her down, but all their endeavours about her were fruitless, for cold-faced Death Nature's bold pursivant had closed up her eyes in an everlasting sleep, which when the young Man perceived, fetching a deep sigh, he breathed forth this sorrowful lamentation.

And what can fortune add more to the compleating of my miseries, who cannot look beyond the prospect of my consuming grief; being one whom the fates have marked out for a seeler of the extremes of miseries, miserable below the reach of pity, whose heart is nothing but a Stage of Tragedies; all the happiness I have being this, that Fortune cannot throw me in a degree of being more miserable.

Sir Billy took great notice of all which he said, imagining thereby some Famous adventure would fall out to be performed by him, and therefore spake thus unto the young Man. Distressed Knight (said he) for so you seemest by thy sorrowful lamentation, do but inform me what humane Wretch hath thus wronged thee, and thy virtuous Lady, and let him be Giant, Monster, or Devil, he shall be chastized by my Arm; for to this end have I taken upon me the profession of Knight Errantry, to right wronged Knights and Ladies, and to rid the World of such Monsters of Nature, whose delight is in mischief, and whose Trades are continued Acts of cruelty.

The young Man who was but as it were newly revived out of a Trance, hearing Sir Billy's discourse, replied, Sir, I am neither Knight, Squire, nor yet good Gentleman, but a Taylor by Trade, living in a village near by this Maiden who is here dead, the Daughter of a wealthy Farmer in the same Parish, both of us by our misfortune and sorrow; In our very infancy, we contracted an indissoluble bond of Friendship between us, and as our years further increased, so our affections grew more and more; and arriving to those years wherein the God of Love maketh the hearts of his subjects to dote more upon a Mistress than an old man on his heaps of Gold; I then began to reveal my affections unto her, which found such a friendly reception, that by mutual vows and promises we contracted our selves each to other. But the foul pale Hog envy that banquets her self in others miseries, repining at our happiness, had caused the heart of a certain Smith of our Town to be Captivated by the charming looks of my Rosaro (for so my Love called her); who with much earnestness declared his affection unto her, using many vows and protestations of the reality of his Love; but her heart was so deeply linked to me, that what love she was, was only mine; he gave him so sharp a denial, that his Love converting to hatred, he went with revengful fury against her, and from thenceforth waited only for an opportunity to put his designs in execution, which at last he brought to pass as you see, for confederating himself with a couple of Fellows the Devils Faction for all wickedness and such whom an honest Man can neither see nor speak with. These having intelligence that Rosaro was to go to an Aunt of hers that liveth here by, and that he was to accompany her, way laid us, and having seized on us, brought us to this Barn, where by overpowering our weak resistance, and having brought cords with them for the Execution of our damnable intents, they in conclusion lugged us up as you saw.

Sir Billy listened very attentively to this discourse, and being exceedingly moved at it, he swore by the bloody Faction of Devils, that e'er Don Phibbus had run his diurnal Course three times about our Hemisphere, he would give such exemplary punishment to the Devil and his perfidious Mates, that Babes unborn shall tremble at the narration of it. Whilst he was thus speaking, the Smith whose guilty Conscience feared a discovery, having found out his Companions, returned again with an intent to murder Sir Billy, Ricardo, and old Gerion, to prevent their giving any knowledge of him. But having entred the Barn, and seeing the Tail of a horse whom they supposed to be dead, they immediately set upon him, and were as quickly yssued upon by Sir Billy; and as being the justest cause he fought in, his success was answerable thereunto, for at the second stroke he beat the Smith so deep a gale on the Wrist as made him to drop his Club, and quite disarm him of any further resistance, which being by the Taylor espied, he snatches up the Smith's Club, and seconded by Ricardo, they jointly set upon the other two; and now were many blows given and received on each side, when old Gerion whose courage was still good, though his strength infirm, not loving to be idle when so necessary a work was to be done, being armed with

a great walking staff, as commonly Beggars go so guarded, he gave one of the Rogues such a rap on the pate as made him to stagger, and seconding it with another, laid him at his Feet, flogging his heels; the Third party seeing this, would have run for it, but being surrounded by them all four, he was forced to abide his fate, and whilst he was defending himself against old *Gerion* and *Ricardo*, who faced him with their Weapons, Sir Billy being behind him, gave him such a wound on the head as felled him to the earth, and sent his Soul to dwell in the lower Regions, there to inhabit with the damned in burning Beds of Steel, Roasted in Sulphur, and wast in deep vast gulphs of Liquid Fire.

The Smith in the mean time, through the loss of so much Blood as issued from his Wound, was fallen into a deep swoond, so that he seemed for the present to be inrolled in the Regiment of Death, but his Companion who had been knockt down by old *Gerion*, being of a strong robustious Nature, reviving again, began for to bustle, as if he would again try for the Victory; which being perceived by Sir Billy, he ran to him, and with his Sword gave him such a Blow on the head, as made him once more to measure his full length on the Earth, and then setting his Foot on his breast, and the point of his Sword to his Throat, he said to him; *Vile Mifcreant, or rather Droll in Hope and Doubt, the impostume of all corruptions, and abstract of all wickedness; Now will I send thy Soul to be an inhabitant in the glooming dwellings of Damned Spirits, there to bathe it self in pools of Scalding Oyl and Sulphur, which thou hast worthily deserved by contracting such a Load of Guilt that lies heavy on thy blood-thirsty Conscience.*

The Murdering Villain hearing such thundring Words, roared out like a Town Bull, craving and crying out for Mercy, when a new crotchet coming into Sir Billy's noddle, he said unto him, I yield thee Mercy though unworthy of it, but upon condition that thou go and present thy self upon thy knees as vanquished by my Victorious Arm, unto the Lady of my Affections, the most renowned *Dulcina* of *Billerecay*, and this you shall Swear to do upon my Sword. I willingly yield to your conditions (said the dissembling Villain) and shall swear Faithfully to perform it. Whereupon Sir Billy let him rise, and was about to give him his Oath, which the young Man perceiving, and that he intended to let him go; Sir (said he) *It is not safe nor convenient so to do, for this Man being a Murd'erer, ought according to the Law to be had before a Justice of the Peace, to be by him examined and secured, that he may receive the reward of his deserts.* Sir Billy having heard what he said, with a vehement indignation replied, Thou speakest (said he) like one altogether ignorant of the Laws of Knight Errantry; ought not the Conquerer to dispose of the Conquered as he pleases? was not he subdued by the Force of my invincible Arm, and therefore to be by me disposed of according to my own will and pleasure; now since my valour whereby I conquered him came by the inspiration of my Lady *Dulcina*, ought not she in retribution thereof to have the honour of this submission, as being magnetically performed by her. But this (said the Taylor) is so notorious a villain, and his crime so Capital, that being once got free, he will never come near her, nor ever make any submission unless he be forced to do it to the Gallows. Why, said Sir Billy, have I not his Oath to perform it? His Oath, quoth the Taylor, is not to be regarded, for he who fears not to commit Murder, will make no Conscience to forswear himself.

Whilst they were thus arguing the Case, the Constable of the Parish, who had a Warrant for the pressing of some Soldiers, being guarded with Four lusty men, came to that place; it being a Common receptacle for sturdy loytering Beggars and Vagabonds; when beholding the floor imbrued with Blood, and strowed with dead Carcasses, he demanded the cause of this so sad a Spectacle? to whom Sir Billy being about to reply, he was interrupted by the Taylor, who declared all the whole business in manner as you heard it before; and withal adding, that Sir Billy being a Knight Errant, was resolved to send that murdering Rogue that was alive to a certain Lady named *Dulcina*, but earnestly desired his Journey might be staid, that the Hangman might not be disappointed of his due.

Yea, said Sir Billy, I am by profession a Knight Errant, my Trade is to kill Gyants and Dragons, and to relieve oppressed Ladies, and distressed Damosels, to release captivated Knights from their Imprisonment, and to bring to confusion the Hellish Brood of Negromancers and Inchanters. Sir (said the Constable) if you are so good for fighting, you will be the fitter to serve the King, and therefore I press you for his Majesty's service. I understand (said Sir Billy) that thou art a Constable, but altogether ignorant in thy Office, for if thou hadst read Books of Chevalry, thou wilt find that Knights Errant are subject to no King nor to no Laws. Sir (said the Constable) if you are subject neither to King nor Laws, then you are a Vagabond, and as a Vagabond I must apprehend ye.

Sir Billy hearing his Knighthood so vilified and degraded, was in a great rage, and drawing his Sword, he bid the Constable defend himself, for he should dearly abide the Blasphemy he had uttered against so Honourable an Order; and thereupon began to fall upon him with all his might. *Ricardo* and old *Gerion* seeing the madness of Sir Billy, stepped to him to have staid his hands, but the more they strived to hinder him, the more he laid on. The messenger that should have gone to the Lady *Dulcina*, seeing them



them thus to bestir themselves; betook himself unto his heels, which the Taylor perceiving, cryed out to follow him, whereupon they left off fighting, and ran after him, all but Sir Billy, who now was an absolute Conqueror, at least in conceit.

The Smith who had all this while lain in a swoond, his Soul now seemed to re-enter his Body, and he freed from this Counterfeit of death, rose up, and stood upright on his Feet; and seeing Sir Billy with a wrathful countenance and a Sword in his hand, he fell on his knees, and humbly implored his Mercy. I grant you Life (said Sir Billy) but upon Condition that as your fellow before you has engaged, you also present your self on your knees, to my Lady Dulcinea, as conquered by my Victorious Arm.

By this time was the Constable returned bringing the fellow along with him, with his hands tyed behind him; and to prevent further mischief, no sooner was he in the Barn, but closing with Sir Billy, struck up his heels, and disarmed him of his Sword, whilst the others seized on the Smith. The Constable would also have tyed Sir Billy's hands had not Ricardo and old Geron interceded for him; However Sir Billy rav'd like a mad Man for the Loss of his Sword, threatening the Constable, whom he branded with the Name of Magician, Sorcerer, Negromancer, and a hundred such other names as he had read in Books of Knight Errantry. The Constable taking him for one whose brains were crazed, gave little regard unto his words, but told him he should have his Sword; Only in the mean time he must go before one of his profession, a righter of wrongs, a reliever of the oppressed, and who by virtue of a piece of Paper can send a Man to an Inchanterd Castle, kept by furious Gyants, so strong and unpregnable, that none can deliver him out of it, but he that is armed with the Sword of Justice.

Shew me one of those Inchanterd Castles (said Sir Billy) and if I do not take it by my Valour, and the strength of my unconquered Arm, Then let my Name be for ever razed out of the Honourable Bead-rolle of Knights Errant, and I esteemed for a Carpet Knight, a meer Toast and Butter, afraid of my own Sword, and affrighted with the clashing of my own Armor.

The Constable hearing Sir Billy's resolution, could not chuse but smile, telling him he would help him to the sight of this Inchanterd Castle, and now all parties being ready, laying the two dead Bodies upon Sir Billy's and Ricardo's Horses, and the two Prisoners pinioned and guarded by the Constables attendants, they set forwards towards a Justice of the Peace his House, where how they sped you shall hear in the Chapter following.

#### CHAP. 14.

*Sir Billy's entertainment at the Justices House, his Oration in praise of the Golden Age, with his challenging the Coroner to fight in defence of Knight-Errantry.*

**T**HIS Justice that they were going to was a very merry conceited Gentleman, which made the Constable the more willing to have Sir Billy to him; and by the way to sooth him up in his Fancies, he told him that the Lord of the Castle whether they were going, was descended in a direct Line by the Fathers side from the Famous *Montelion Knight of the Oracle*, and by the Mothers side from the Renowned *Amadis de Gaul*; That all the brave Heroes mentioned in the *Mirror of Knighthood* were near of Kin to his Ancestors, as also that *Don Belianis of Greece*, *Parismus*, and *Pheander the Maiden Knight*, were his great Grandfathers first Cousins. Ricardo heard all their discourse, with great attention, and hearing him nominate only foreign kindred, he asked the Constable how it came to pass that his Ancestors marched into such remote parts, and not rather into their own Country, and if they did, what Kin this Lord of the Castle was to *Guy Earl of Warwick*, or *Bevis of Southampton*.

I have heard (said the Constable) by Tradition, and they say it is recorded in the *Chronicles of Miconi-con*, that *Earl Terry* who was sisters Son to *Guy*, was Nephew to *Euphrosina* this Lord of the Castle's great Grandfathers Aunt, and that *Sabers* Sir *Bevis* his Uncle was Nephew in two descents to *Earl Terry*. Thou speakest (said Sir Billy) as one well versed in the study of Knight Errantry, and indeed it hath been often in my own thoughts, that I am descended from *Valentini* or *Orson*, *Don Flores of Greece*, *Palmerin of England*, or some of those renowned Champions whose Names flourish in the Book of Fame, because I feel in my self those sparks of Fire kindled in my breast, which do stir up noble minds to valiant performances.

By this time they were come to the Justices House, where before they were examined, the Constable acquainted him with the humor of Sir Billy, and what discourse he had had with him, which pleased his Fancy extraordinarily; but having a great respect to Justice, he first sifted out the Business concerning the two dead Corps which were brought before him, and upon examination sent the Smith and his partner to Prison, retaining Sir Billy still with him, and using such respect to him as he thought was most correspondent to a Knight Errant.

Sir Billy whilst the Justice was examining the Prisoners, busied himself with viewing some old Helms, Corsets,

Corsetts, and Launces which were hanged up in the Hall, being to <sup>be</sup> ~~more~~ hangings than the best Tapistry that could adorn it. And now the Company being gone, Sir Billy was invited to a Banquet of several dishes suitable to the season; but e'er he would sit down to participate of it, he began a long Oration in praise of Frugality, to usher in the great need of Knight Errantry, which with an audible voice he delivered in these words.

Thrice happy was that time which men do call the *Golden Age*, not because Gold was then plenty, but for the Innocent and harmless lives of those that lived in it: being contented with those things which Nature produced of it self; Their Meat was the Roots of the Earth, Nuts and Acorns, dainty Fare; and for Liquors, they had recourse to the Chrystal Spring; the Earth brought forth Roses and flowers of it self, without the Midwifry of Gardeners, and the common wealth of Bees instead of stings carried Honey in their Tails. Those contentious words of *Meum* and *Tuum* were not known in the World. Men contented themselves with Cloaths made of the Fleece as it came from the Sheep, which they wore only for Warmth, for Pride was then a stranger on the Earth. The Lambs fed securely by the Lyons side, and Warm Zephyrus breathed forth a continual Spring. In those days there was no bandying of War Nation against Nation, nor did men dare in a thin ribb'd Bark to cross the Ocean for uncertain gain. There was no need of threatening Laws to be prescribed in Brass, for men knew not what it was to offend. Justice was then blind indeed, and could not see to take any bribes. There was no need of *Italian Padlocks*, for Lust then was a vice unknown. But after corruptions began to increase, that bribes and Rapes were ripe in every place, when the stronger sought to oppress the weaker, and great Thieves sat on the Bench to condemn the little ones; when Ladies innocency could not defend their chastity from the assaults of wicked and vicious Men; when vice came thus to predominate, then was this Valiant and chaste order of Knight Errantry invented, whose office it is to relieve the oppressed, vindicate Ladies, help Orphans, rescue those who are in Prison, and pull the pride of Tyrants down; and of this noble order am I, which howsoever maligned and opposed by wicked Magicians and Sorcerers, yet is there no Order, Calling, nor profession in the World, so necessary to humane kind as this; And though I desire not to be the Trumpeter of my own praise, what I have performed herein, (besides the witness of my Squire Ricardo, the Author of my History, for every Knight Errant hath an Historian to declare his Acts) will in after-ages make known the Noble performances which have been achieved by me.

The whole Company applauded Sir Billy's speech, and said, it was great pity so necessary an Order of Knighthood should remain dormant so long, and how happy the succeeding age would be, that should read with wonder the noble Achievements performed by his Victorious Arm. Which words puffed up Sir Billy with such a timpany of pride, that like the Bladder he was ready to burst with the Wind of vain Glory. And now being tickled with the undeserved praise, he willing to sit down with them at the Banquet, where he could scarcely feed himself for feeding the Ears of his Auditors with discourses of his Adventures, in the mean time the Justice sent for the Coroner to come with all the speed he could, for fear Sir Billy, who was a main witness in the business, might have a magget in his Head to be gone, and therefore the better to retain him, he spake to him in these words.

*Most Renowned Knight, who though but young in Years, yet art Old in Fame and experience of Arms, whose desert our Ships all praise I can bestow upon thee; Had the divine Homer, one of the Muses first Priests, been Contemporary with thee, how proud he would have been of so sublime a subject to heighten his Fancy; a subject adequate to Apollo himself, and his whole Quire of Daughters. How benign must I esteem those Stars whose influence directed thy Foot-steps to my Habitation, hoping that as Ulysses communicated his Travels and Adventures to Queen Dido, so from his own mouth they should receive a relation of those noble Achievements performed by him, whereof Fame had been so liberal in publishing of them.*

Sir Billy needed no spur to be put forward in such matters, his Tongue was ever ready to run Post in any thing which he thought tended to his own praise, and therefore without any more intreaty he began a long discourse of his entrance into Knight Errantry, how he became enamour'd on a most Beautiful Lady named *Dulcinea*; his entertaining Ricardo to be his Squire, and of their first encounter with a tall Giant in a Corn Field, whom he overthrew by main strength of Arms; how he was Knighted by the Lord of a Castle, and how in relieving of a certain Queen, he encountered with another mighty Giant, in which by the envy of certain wicked Magicians he fell into a deep Cave, from which he was delivered by the Sage *Freston*; and so ran on in a rambling narration of all his Adventures, as you heard in the foregoing History; but still imputing all his misfortunes to the malice of Megromancers and Inchanters, who are always enemies to Knights Errant. *Yet shall not their malice (said he) deter me from prosecuting my revenge against those wicked Miscreants, Giants and Sorcerers, till I have rooted out the whole Generation of them from off the face of the Earth.*

Scarcely



Scarcely had Sir Billy finished his discourse, when there came to the Door a fellow cunning in showing thought by showing his Art he might get some Money there; the Justice understanding his employment, was very glad of the occasion, to divert Sir Billy, and keep him till the Coroner came; He therefore brought the Fellow to the Company, and bid him for to show his skill. Sir Billy had never seen any of these Legerdemain Tricks before, and therefore his Spirits were struck into admiration, and his Soul intranced with wonder. Ricardo all this while stood by, and seeing his Master struck into such an astonishment, thought to make some sport, as well as the Jugler, and slipping on his invisible Ring, when Hocus had laid his Tin Boxes and Balls on the Table, and was feeling in his pocket for some other Instruments of activity, he takes them up and puts them in his pocket: Hocus seeing his Boxes and Balls *Hi Presto* to be gone, was more amazed than Sir Billy was at his Tricks; but thinking some of the Company might do it to make themselves merry, and loth to challenge any in particular, he thought to catch them by craft, and therefore pulling out a *Jack in a Box*, some Counters and Dice to do more feats withall, he lays them as it were carelessly upon the Table, yet still had a special eye who took them. Ricardo thought what was his drift, yet dreading not his policy, boldly steps to the Table and quickly made them invisible. The Jugler seeing the rest of his things to be gone thus without hands, stood like one that was stupified, or like Stags at a gaze, as if his understanding were in an extasie. At last he swore there was some Conjuror amongst them, whose art was far transcendent above his, for he did but play the Devil in Jest, but they had plaid the Devil with him in Earnest. At this the whole Company burst out into such a laughter as if they had for ever banish'd all melancholly from their Society. This exceeding mirth made Hocus more vexed then before, so that he began to swear like a Culter, for having now lost his Tools, he might even shut up Shop for any thing he could do.

And now a new project of mirth came into the noddle of one of the Company, who perswaded the Jugler that Sir Billy had taken away his things, and that to get them again, there was no way but using him roughly, which he should not need fear to do, because Sir Billy what ever he bragged himself to be, was but a meer Honey-sop, a dish of skim'd Milk, whose Feet was his best defence, and his Tongue his best Weapon. The Jugler animated herewith, steps to Sir Billy and said, Sir, I understand you have gotten my things, and therefore pray give me them again without any more Fooling; which if you refuse to do, I shall make you such an Example of my wrath and Indignation, as shall make you curse the time that ever you saw me.

Sir Billy hearing such threatening words from one he thought so much beneath him, in great anger replied; Thou wicked Enchanter, unworthy to live upon the Face of the Earth, who hast made a league with Hell, and a Covenant with the Devil to be his Servant; Think not by thy wicked Charms to escape my fury, for if thou hast as many hands as Briareus, and in every hand there were a Sword, yet would I encounter with thee, my Valour being such, as to know no fear in my self, yet to teach it others that have to do with me. And thereupon drawing his Sword began to lay on load upon Hocus, who seeing Sir Billy was in earnest, thought his best refuge to be his Heels, running with such hasty steps as if his feet scarce toucht the Ground, being more swift in his flight than *Daphne* when she fled from the embraces of *Apollo*; whereupon the Company gave such a shout as made the House to Ring; their loud exclamations cleaving the yielding Air, like the roaring of a whole Herd of Lyons, (or if it could be) greater than the Noise of Ten Irish Funerals.

Sir Billy seeing his flight so swift, thought it in vain to pursue him any further, and thereupon returned in as great State as the Macedonian Victor from the Conquest of *Darius*. The Justice meeting him congratulated his success, giving him as much praise as if it had been the thirteenth labour of *Alcides*; the other persons also each one in proper words sought to magnifie this his enterprize, although an attempt so inconsiderable, that had the Jugler had but as much valour as an *Humble-Bee*, with a dozen of dangerous words in his mouth, he might have resisted him with a Bull-Rush.

By this time the Coroner was come to the House, and a Jury impannelled to enquire about the two dead Persons; The first witness that was examined was Sir Billy, who being requested to tell his knowledge in the particulars, spake as followeth.

You shall know Courteous Gentleman, that by profession I am a Knight Errant, an Order of all the most beneficial to mankind, which were it highly cherished as it is deserving, it would encourage many noble Spirits to the profession thereof, by whose many prowess all Tyrants and oppressors of the Poor being suppressed, we should have no need of Lawyers, Attorneys, nor Solicitors, who pretending to right people in their causes, do them more wrong by their extorsions and Fees, than they received by the parties against whom they sued. In the prosecution of these Knightly adventures, it was my Fortune or rather lucky Chance to come to an old ruined Castle, attended only by my Squire Ricardo, and an

*The Famous History of Sir Billy of Billerica,*

Old Gentleman, one of the *Knights of Industry*; Into this solitary Receptacle being entered to shade us from the burning beams of the refulgent Sun, we espied there a most sad and dolorous <sup>Scene</sup> Woman hanged, and a Man hanging, with little hopes of Life in either; which we had scarce leisure to view, when a lusty stout robustious fellow rushed from forth the place, and winged with haste, ran away as swift as the sweeping stream or winged Arrow. He being gone, we cut the young Man down, who was near entred into the territories of Death, yet by helps that was used, he was brought again to the possession of Life, as you see there standing before ye; but the Woman, who was the Lady of his Affections, notwithstanding all endeavours which we used, we could never perswade her fullest Soul for to re-enter into her Body, but Life's Candle was quite extinct in her.

Whilst we were thus fruitlessly employed in the recovery of the Maid, the murdering Villain who had ran from us before, now returned again with two others, who had been partners with him in his Butcherly design, and setting upon us, thought to have made us a morsel for the Jaws of Death, and with their Clubs have signed our Passport into another World, but I perceiving what was their intentions, drawing my Sword, and invocating the Lady *Dalcina* for aid, let upon the Villains, and in an instant brought two of them to the Ground, of which Death, the Graves Parveyor, took possession of one, the other soon after recovered, whom we brought unto you, as also the third, who though he ran away from me, yet was brought back again by my Squire *Ricardo* and the *Knight of Industry*, with some others who came into our assistance, although had I been alone, the strength of my Victorious Arm had been enough to have Conquered them all.

The whole Company highly applauded Sir Billy's valour, as a true Son of *Mars*, that derides Death, and meets with Triumph in a Tomb. Afterwards was the Taylor examined, as also old *Gerion*, and *Ricardo*, who agreeing all in one Tale, the Jury found the Maids to be wilful Murderers, and the killing of the Fellow done in their own defence.

The Justice being a bountiful Housekeeper, invited the Coroner and Jury, as also Sir Billy, *Ricardo*, and old *Gerion* to Dinner, which he had caused to be provided for them against they had done. After Dinner the Justice and Coroner fell into a deep discourse, the Coroner being of Opinion, that the Order of Knights Errant was a needless, Idle, unnecessary employment, for that the Laws being so open, wrongs might be redressed, and the oppressed eased far better by the Law, than by their Swords, which oftentimes for want of due knowledge of the case, did far greater wrong than right: And as for Books of Chevalry, he judged them to be very prejudicial to a well-governed Common-Wealth, wherein Men might bestow their time better than in reading Fictions, impossibilities, and in many of them incitements rather to looseness and Vanity, than any instructions to virtuous Living. To this the Justice replied, that Knights Errant have in former Ages been applauded by learned Persons, for such was *Hercules*, whose going about and destroying Gyants and Monsters, was no other than Knight-Errantry, and for which they honoured him as a God; and then for reading Books of Chevalry, what prejudice could come by reading them? for the subjects of them being known to be fabulous and fictions, no man's faith is beguiled, nor any perswaded to believe them as a truth; rather on the contrary, where the minds of the vulgar are not busied in some such pleasant arguments, they fall upon matters which less concerns them, and become troublesome Judges of the State and Church wherein they live, and therefore it hath been accounted great Policy to divert Mens Fancies by reading such Romances.

Many other ways might be invented (*said the Coroner*) to divert Mens Fancies, than this destructive one of reading such Books, which the better they are Writ, the more dangerous they are, for some young people are so intentive upon them, that they imagine themselves to be such as they read of; And such a one I suppose this young man to be, who by reading Books of Knight Errantry, would Fool himself into a conceit that he is a Knight Errant. But such people so conceited ought not to be soothed up in their Follies, but rather sharply reprov'd, and if that will not mend them, then either let them be sent to *Bedlam*, or Whipped at a Caris-Tayle, until this foolish humour be Whipped out of them.

Sir Billy was in such a rage to hear these words, that the icy Current of his frozen blood kindled up in agonies as hot as flames of burning Sulphur, fretting and fuming like a piece of Gum'd Velter. Monster of all wicked Men (*said he*) whom I cannot name without spitting after it for fear of being poysoned; could thy malice vent it self in nothing but speaking against the most noble Order of Knight-Errantry? nor know I whether thy envy or arrogance be greatest in it, nor what punishment is equivalent to such high presumption; yet shall not thy malapertness escape unpunished, if my trusty Sword fail me not, and therefore if thou art as valiant of thy hands as thou hast been prodigal of thy Tongue, I challenge thee out into the field to fight with me; which if thou shalt deny to do, I shall proclaim thee



thee the most Cowardly Carpet Knight that ever wore Sword, only valiant in Voice, but at the sight of an Enemy ready to run away from thy self.

The Coroner who was a man well skill'd at his Weapon, and with Courage answerable to his skill, scorning to be out-braved by such a Princocks, was resolv'd to chastise his folly, and therefore told him, that though it were beneath him to answer one so Inconsiderable, yet least his rashness should take that to be fear which was only contempt, he would answer him at any time, place, or weapon he should appoint; bidding him be sure in making his words good of what he had promised; or else he would be a shame unto the Order he did profess.

And I quoth Ricardo, Squire unto the renowned Knight Sir Billy of Billerscay, do challenge the Squire that belongeth to the Knight which is to fight with my master, at any Weapon he shall propose to fight withal, so it be such a Weapon as former Squires to Knights-Errent used for to fight withal. This unexpected Challenge of Ricardo put all the Company into a merry kind of amazement, endeavouring by all means to have the humor go forward. There was at that time attending on the Coroner a young Man much about the Age and stature of Ricardo, who hearing this Challenge, desired his Master he might accept of it, which being granted him, he told Ricardo he should be answered at his own Weapon, at the time and place when their Masters did fight. All things being thus agreed, they next consult of the time and place when, and where it should be done; Sir Billy would have had a fortnights space, and that in the mean time Messengers should be sent abroad to declare by sound of Trumpet in all Market-Towns and general assemblies of this their fight; But the Justice and Coroner not willing to have a private diversisement made so publick, would not agree to it; so at last it was concluded to be the second day after, in a large Meadow behind the Justices House, during which time the four Combatants prepared themselves for the encounter, which how it was performed on both sides, we shall in the next Chapter (the sacred nine assisting in our endeavours) in full and ample manner declare unto you.

CHAP. 15.

*Sir Billy's Encounter with the Coroner: How he was relieved by Ricardo. His admirable description of his Mistress: With Ricardo's Counterbuff thereto.*

SOON had wide-mouth'd Tatling Fame dispersed the News of the combat betwixt Sir Billy and the Coroner, so that at the day appointed there was a great concourse of people to behold the same. The Old Justice had the day before highly caressed Sir Billy; and his Daughter a Virgin of about sixteen years of Age, gave him all the encouragement she could, bestowing a Ribbon upon him to wear on his Hat, telling him that if he overcame him he should be her Knight; and that she should account her self the most happy Woman in the World to have such a Servant.

I think my self extraordinarily engaged to you for your goodness, said Sir Billy, and doubt not Madam of my success, it being in the vindication of those noble Knights, *Amadis de Gault*, *Sir Huan of Bourdeaux*, *Don Belianis of Grece*, *Palmerin of England*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Don Flores of Grece*, *Sir Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Southampton*, and abundance of other noble Heroes, who spending their time in Arms, dyed in the Bed of Honour, whose memory this foul Miscreant seeks to deprave, and that with such opprobrious words, enough to raise the Ghost of those deceased Worthies out of their Graves, to vindicate their own Honour, had not the Fates allotted me in this latter Age to be a Brother of that noble Society, for the punishment of all those who shall offer to villifie such a noble, profitable, Honourable Order.

You have reason in what you say, (replied the Damsel,) for should such noble Orders fall into contempt, it would be a great discouragement to vertuous enterprizes, and then for want of such persons how would the World be pester'd with Tyrants, Oppressors, and merciless persons, Dragons and Monsters would abound in every place, and Gyaunts so increase, that the habitable World would be turned into a meer Desert.

Whilst they were thus discoursing, there came a Messenger to Sir Billy to bid him make ready for the encounter, for his Antagonist was upon entering the Lists; whereupon Sir Billy buckled on his Armor, which was something difficult for him to do, each piece being so ill proportioned to the other; and now thus Armed, as he thought *Cap-a-pe*, he marched into the field against his Enemy, who was attending him, clad in a Buff Coat, with no other Aymor but his Sword. Ricardo and the other

other young man came into the field, habited for to fight, and with a resolution invulnerable to the Courage of their Masters. And now a general expectation was fixed in the minds of the Spectators, each promising to themselves an assured Victory. but the Eyes of most there present were fully fixed on Sir Billy, who marched in as great state towards the Coroner as *Hector* the *Trojan* Prince before the Walls of *Ilium*, and being come near to him, he said, yield thy self Prisoner to my conquering Arm, else shall thy Life pay for thy Tongues presumption. I crave no favour, said the Coroner, but look to thy self, else will the Honour of Knight Errantry lie in the dust; and thereupon they began to lay on at each other, Sir Billy with much strength and fury, the Coroner with Courage Joyned with skill, by which he so much o're-matched our young Knight Errant, that notwithstanding he earnestly invocated his Lady *Dulcinea*, and implored the assistance of the whole *Mirror of Knighthood*, the Coroner so bestirred him, that putting by the thrust of his Sword, he closed within him, and strikeing up his heels, took his Sword from him, telling him he was not fitting to wear any such Weapon, without he knew how to handle it better.

This Combat gave more cause of laughter than admiration, Sir Billy having promised so much and performed so little. In the mean time *Ricardo* and the Coroners Man began a more mirthful Combat between them; for *Ricardo* by vertue of his *Invisible-Ring* feared not any danger he should be exposed unto, which made him so forward to challenge the other. With much Courage and resolution these two Petty-Toes of *Mars* did fight it out for a while, but when *Ricardo* saw his Master lie at the mercy of the Conqueror, and himself hard bested, he thought it was high time for him to fly to his old shifts, and therefore skipping about in anticke manner to make the people laugh, and counterfeiting a flight, he slipped on his *Invisible-Ring*, and then returning with great confidence, laid on load upon the Coroner, who feeling the blows, and not seeing the hand that gave him them, was struck into such a Panick fear, that he ran away as swift as the Eastern wind, or shafts shot from a *Russian* Bow. *Ricardo* seeing his flight too swift for him to overtake, turned to the other, and as one that had all his thoughts bound up in Choller, he laid on load with might and main. The young man seeing how his Master had run for it before, thought it was in vain for him to stay behind, especially when blows came so thick and fast, and therefore betook himself to his heels; *Ricardo* following him, sometimes strikeing him on the Back, and sometimes tripping up his heels, making him tumble over and over, which caused a great laughter in the people, to see the Master and Man after they had obtained the Victory, to run away as they thought from their own Shadows. Sir Billy, who lay fretting vexed with this disgrace, feeling them both run away, presently an imagination came into his head, how the Sage *Frisson* had lent him relief, and therefore rising, and taking up his Sword which the Coroner for haste had dropped as he ran, he flourished it about his Head, saying, Come all ye Miscreants, Foes to Knight Errantry, come I say and see how the Fates Favours those who are followers of this noble Order, against whom no strength of Arms nor Magical Charms is able to prevail, having always some to succour them in their greatest distress; And thou Sage *Frisson*, how am I bound to thee for thy special aid in all my necessities, how would this Vile Monster have Domineer'd had he prevailed over me; how would the Honour of Knight Errantry have been deprest, had I miscarried in this Action; How will after-Ages read the History that shall be written of me with admiration, what perils I have endured for the Honour of Knight Errantry. Whilst he was thus Vaunting, the Coroner who had by this time run himself out of breath, feeling no more blows, nor seeing any one; ashamed of himself for this Cowardise, he returned back again towards Sir Billy with more fury and indignation than before, and laying about him as furiously as *Achilles* on the flying *Trojans*, he had given Sir Billy a total overthrow, had not *Ricardo*, seeing his Master in such danger, left following the young Man, and come to his rescue, and seeing it was no time to delay, he laid upon the Coroner, giving blows as thick and fast as when he threshed Corn before he turned Squire Errant. The Coroner feeling the smart of the blows, and seeing nothing by which he received them, was struck with a deep amazement, like a Man gone a far Journey from himself, or like unto Prisoners when they felt themselves turned into Beasts, so that instead of running from his Enemy, he was ready to run away from himself. Sir Billy who was always more valiant of his Tongue than his hands, seeing the Coroner stand struck with astonishment, as if he had lookt on the *Gorgons* Face, began to bristle up himself, speaking such Gigantick words, that if his deeds were to be measured by them, each one that heard him would have taken him for a Man of Valour. But Sir Billy was one of them who could speak much and do but little, for the Coroner exasperated at his words, ran upon him, and by main strength overthrew him, and doubtless had kill'd him on the place, had not *Ricardo* also run upon him, and tumbling him over Sir Billy, by that means gave his Master leave to rise again. The Company seeing them thus in earnest, fearing it would grow to more mischief than was intended, resolved to part them, which *Ricardo* perceiving, he left the



two Combatants, and getting out of sight, pulled off his Invisible Ring, and returned back, limping all the way as one wounded in the encounter. This bred more wonder in the Company than any thing that had passed before, how Ricardo should come to be hurt, seeing, to their thinking, he ran away before he received any Wound, or the least matter that should cause him to halt.

Alcornoque, ere he came at them, began to exclaim on this manner. Accursed place, that ever valorous Knight Errant, or faithful Squire, should come into it, surely the Stygian Prince, that general Adversary of human Nature, haunts this place, who by his wicked Emulraries hath so belaboured me, as if he intended to make Mummy of my flesh; but could I but see this black Prince of Achernar, or any of those his infernal Messengers which thus carried me out of the fight, he should see I would not fear to encounter with him; but thus to beat and misuse Men unseen, is both Cowardly and base, and quite contrary to the Rules of Knight Errantry.

The Coroner and his Man hearing Ricardo's discourse, declared how they were also served, shewing several Cuts and gashes of a Sword on their Clothes, with some slight hurts on their Bodies, protesting it could be no other than a Spirit. This made them all amazed but only Sir Billy, who would needs persuade them it was a punishment inflicted on them by the Sage Erismar, who was an Enemy to all those who opposed Knight Errantry, and a special Friend in all times of distress to them who practised the Rules of that noble Order.

But (replied the old Justice) how comes it to pass that Ricardo, who is at least a renamer to Knight Errantry, should also be punished by him, as well as those who are professed Enemies of that Order? That is deservedly inflicted on him (replied Sir Billy) because not many days before I came thither, his foolish Tongue was venting some speeches derogatory to that noble profession; Nay, so far did his folly prevail with him, that he would have persuaded me to have left off pursuing of Knightly Adventures, and to have spent the remainder of my days in ease and idleness, had I not been endowed with a heart bewixt whom and fear there's an antipathy, my known disposition being such, as to scorn those dangers which would make a Coward tremble to think on.

Ricardo had much ado to forbear laughing out-right, to hear his Master talk so ridiculously, as also to think how he had possessed the Coroner and his Man with a firm belief that they were beaten by Spirits; but by this means all thoughts of fighting any more being quite laid aside, the Justice invited them all unto his House, and that there might be a thorough reconciliation betwixt them, the Coroner led Sir Billy by the hand, and his Man the Squire Ricardo. Here did the Justice express his bountiful nature by the great entertainment he gave them, which was such, as if *Ceres* and *Bacchus* had taken up his House for their habitation. The Justice's Daughter, who had before so graced Sir Billy, being extremely taken with his extravagancies, to follow on the humour, entertained him in these Words.

Most noble Knight, whose prowess is far above my expressions, blind Fortunes Mincion in Valorous attempts, having a Spirit of greater confidence than can give admittance to any thoughts of Cowardise; more welcome is thy presence to me, than that of *Ulysses* to the chaste *Penelope* after his Ten Years absence at the Siege of *Troy*. How happy is that Lady which hath so renowned a Champion to her Servant, more Fortunate is she in her Choice, than was *Sabra* the King of *Spain's* Daughter in *St. George*, the Beautiful *Rosalinde* in *St. Dennis of France*, or the renowned *Philotheta* in that of *Montellian Knight of the Oracle*.

Indeed (said Sir Billy) the Goddess of my affections is such a one, that should I go about to describe her, I must use the help of the most precious things, and invoke the learnedest of the Nine Muses for my assistance. Her Hair, that Amorous Cordage, like to a rich and artful Corquer, shews like to Curly tresses for Beauties Chamber. Her Forehead, Beauties Sphear, shews like to a Mount of bleached Snow, built upon two Ivory Arches. Her Eyes those starry Jewels, such as might Captivate Love, and her Eye-brows enough to Work miracles with their Magick Circles. Her Cheeks like two banks of fairest Flowers enrich'd with sweetness, like mingled Baths of Milk and Roses. Her Ears those watchful Sentinels, need no Jewels to Adorn them, her Ears themselves being all Jewels. Her Nose such where *Zephyrus* delights to sport. Her Lips are melting Rubies, where Love plants and gathers Kisses. Her Teeth like Ivory pikes, which inclose a Tongue made up of sweetest Honey. Her Breath comes stealingly from her, as if it seemed loth to come forth from so delicious a Mansion, but that it hoped to be drawn in again to that well closed Paradise. Her Neck shews like a Silver Pillar, more white than Towers of polished Ivory. Her Breasts, those Twins of Miracle, are like two Hillocks betwixt which a Thousand Cupids lie. A Waist as strait and clean as *Hermes* Rod, or *Circus* Wand. Her Belly, Natures Kitchen, round soft and Plump, more tempting than Gold to a greedy Usurer. Her Thighs like soft Ivory pillars, supporters of that goodly frame I have already described. Her Knees so well compacted, that Nature therein

therein observed her choicest Symmetry. Her Legs, Cupid's Columns more than the thighs of *Jove*. Her Feet, such as with their pace do move a band of Beauties. In brief, she is one as may serve for a foyle to *Cupid's Mother*, whose very looks can turn the saddest Night to Day, the first and best original of all fair Copies.

This description of his Mistress struck the Justice's Daughter into amazement, as taking her to be a piece whom Nature in the Composing had taken the choicest excellencies from divers others to make one every ways compleat; but knowing Lovers are partial in the description of their Mistresses excellencies; that she might be the better informed, finding *Ricardo* alone, and in a merry humor, she desired him to inform her fully in the accomplishments of his Masters so celebrated Lady.

*Ricardo*, who was almost weary of his Squire Errantry, and perceiving that his hopes of being Governour of an Island would not amount to be Monarch of a Mole-Hill; and that all his Masters projects and designs were but mere *Chymera's* and Idle Imaginations; was resolved therefore to leave off this kind of Vagabonding Life; and if his Master would not be perswaded to go home, to leave him in pursuance of his folly; being therefore fearless of his displeasure, he thought to give the Gentlewoman a more Comical but truer description of this Lady of perfections, which he performed in this manner.

To begin with her upper parts, Her hair (said he) hangs down her neck like crawling Snakes, curiously pleated into *Elt-Locks*. Her Forehead like a piece of new-furrowed Land, or like the parched Earth in the heat of *Day-days*. Her Eyes like two Mill-pits continually running over, on either side of which hangs two Soules or Ears, of such a prodigious greatness, that were they cut off and Tann'd, would serve a Cobler a Month for Clouting Leather. Her Cheeks are like two shrimped skins of parchment, and her Nose comparable to that in the picture of Mother *Sibylla*. Her Mouth opens and shuts like a Carriers Pouch, and her Teeth are like to an old Park-Pale. Her Lips resemble those of the *Hags-Pac d Gentlewoman*, and her Tongue sounds as loud as *Bow-Bell*. As for her breath, I must crave the help of the Poet to describe it.

But for her Breath, (*Spectators come not nigh,*)  
It lays about, God bless the Company,  
Out Kiss, and tighten Words of her alone,  
Put down the Spanish Inquisition,  
Thrice blessed we (quoth I) when I think on,  
The former days of persecution;  
For were it free to kill, this grisly Elf,  
Would Martyrs make, in compass of her self:  
And were she not prevented by our Prayer,  
By this time she corrupted had the Air;  
The *Man in the Bears-skin*, banished to Death,  
Would chooseth the Dogs much rather than her Breath.

Then for her Neck, it is like a pair of Stairs up to a Belfry, and her shoulders able to bear the biggest Jest that can be put upon them. Her Dugs are like two ore-worn Foot-Balls, and her sides resembling the planks of a Cheese-press. Her Waist would waste half an hours time to go about it, being tall and slender as a Windmill-Post. Her Belly is like to the Tun at *Hildesburge* and her Buttocks and Thighs correspondent thereunto. In brief, she is one made up of Natures most deformities, a natural Vizard, like a Winters Apple strunk up together, and half rotten.

The young Gentlewoman laughed very heartily at *Ricardo's* description of this Lady Errant, and thought it might be more Consonant to the truth than that delivered by Sir Billy. That *Ricardo* (said she) perhaps may be the reason that your Master doth not carry the picture of his Mistress along with him, as formerly Knights Errant were wont to do, by which they used to vindicate their Beauties in Jests and Tournaments against all opposers. It would nor (said *Ricardo*) be worth a painters time to bestow so much cost on so ill-favoured a piece. And I suppose my Master Fancies her more by imagination, than any thing really what she is.

Whilst they were thus discoursing, old *Thomas* (Sir Billy's Father) having heard of the encounter his Son was to perform with the Coroner (to whose Town Fame had trumpeted the report) he resolved now to be even with him, and to take such a course as should for ever spoil his Knight-Errantry. He therefore being Armed with the Authority of a Justice of the Peace, and attended by three or four lusty fellows, seized upon Sir Billy unawares; and with an angry countenance, scattered in ruddy flakes of Wrath, like to a chafed Boar whom eager Hounds have at a Bay, he thus spake to him.

Thou



Thou impudent Vagabond, which without restraint of shame or Modesty dost wander about under the notion of a Knight Vagabond; nor will I take that Coarſe with thee as we do with our Horſes; I will ſhackle thee, and if that will not do, but that thou wilt ſtill run at random, then will I have thee put in ſuch a pound, where Old Men and Young Men are much alike, for neither go far; I mean (Sirrah) a Priſon, which is a place where a doublet with buttons is more out of Faſhion than Trunk Breeches; where people wear out their Lives like an old Suit, the ſafer the better; a houſe of meagre looks and ill ſmells; ſo curſed a piece of Land, that the Son is aſhamed to be his Father's Heir in it. And thither Sirrah ſhalt thou go, if thou wilt not be ruled, maugre all the Witchcraft of thy doury Squire Ricardo, who by his wicked ſpells ſtole away my Horſes from the Inn, whom I will cauſe to be puniſhed in a more exemplary manner than thy ſelf.

Ricardo heard all theſe words, but truſting to the virtue of his Ring, he feared not what Thomasſo could do unto him. But Sir Billy was ſtruck with ſuch a deep amazement at this ſudden ſurprizal, as if he had ſtared on the Gorgons Face, and lookt like Circus Priſoners when they found themſelves Metamorphoſed into Beaſts; at laſt recovering the uſe of his ſpeech, he thus ſpoke to old Thomasſo.

Unhappy Father, deſtructive to thy Country, and envious to poſterity that is to come, who by thy obſtinacy wilt deprive after Ages of the benefit they might have received by my unconquerable Valour. But the Juſtice ſeeing him to run into his former extravagancies, and being now wearied with his impertinencies, he reſolved to ſend him by force home with his Father, and therefore bid him prepare to go, and that willingly, or elſe he would take ſuch a couple with him, as ſhould for ever ſpoil his Knight Errantry.

But Sir Billy pleaded it was againſt the Law of Arms to deal injuriouſly with Knights Errant, who ought to be hoſpitably received where-ever they come, as Men who had denoted themſelves for the good of their Country, and that they were above any Law of Juſtice, nor under the Cognizance of any Magiſtrate, as being fellows to Kings and Princes, many of which had born of that profeſſion themſelves. But the Juſtice would not ſuffer him any longer to run on in his wild extravagancies, but commanded his Servants to lay hold of him, and alſo to fetch in Ricardo, that they might be both pack't away together; but this was eaſier commanded than performed, for Ricardo ſlipping on his Inviſible Ring was now where to be ſeen; yet conſidering the Juſtice was now about to order them ſower ſauce to their ſweet Mear, he was reſolved to have one bout with them before he went, and therefore whiſt old Thomasſo was making his complaint to the Juſtice, Ricardo ſtanding behind, clapt his hand on his Mouth ſo often on and off, that the old Man could ſay nothing but *ſo, ſo, ſo*; whereupon the Juſtice taking him to be an old doating Fool, and that his Son was the more excuſable, as taking his folly originally from his Parents; he therefore bid him hie him Home again, and both of them ply their Buſineſs better, or elſe inſtead of being pityed for their folly, they might be ſoundly laſht for their Knavery.

Ricardo liſtend very attentively to the Juſtices diſcourſe, and ſeeing he was ſo liberal of his Whipping chear, he was reſolved to beſtow a caſt of his office upon him; ſo ſtepping unto him, he ſo pulled and twaged the Juſtice by the Noſe, that he roared and bellowed like a *Calverſter-Bull*. Now was the whole Houſe in a great Conſternation, hearing the Juſtice ſo to take on; Old Thomasſo all the while crying out upon Ricardo, calling him Witch, Wizard, Negromancer, Sorcerer, Soothſayer, Charmer, Devil, and all the other opprobrious names he could reckon up.

The Juſtice herewith was in a terrible Scare, and commanded Ricardo ſhould be immediately laid hold on; but being ſearch't for in every place he could no where be found. Sir (ſaid Thomasſo) this Ricardo is the left hand of the Devil, a right *Lancashire Witch*, who can change himſelf into what ſhape he pleaſes; and who knows but that he may turn himſelf into a *Flea*, and ſo ſkip into your Daughters Bed; I tell you it is a dangerous thing, and if he ſhould prove with Child, a Man might eaſily gueſs who was the Father.

The whole Company could not forbear laughing at Thomasſo's diſcourſe, but the Juſtice was more exasperated againſt him than before, thinking their whole deſign to be more out of Knavery than ſimplicity, and therefore commanded that both Thomasſo and Sir Billy ſhould be ſet in the Stocks, whiſt Ricardo was looking up to accompany them, and then he would take ſuch order with them as he thought fitting. But the Stocks happening to be broken at that time, the Conſtable to ſecure them put them both in the Cage, which ſo exasperated our Knight Errant, that he ſwore by the fiery Faſhion of bloody Mars, he would either free himſelf from that captivity, or loſe his Life in the Adventure. And ſo having all his thoughts bound up in Choller, like mad Oſſes, in a great fury, he ran with all his might againſt the Bars of the Cage, and like another *Bajazet* beat out his own Brains.

Old Thomasſo ſeeing what had happened, was ſtruck into a marvellous aſtoniſhment, ſo transformed with Wonder, that he ſtood like to a breathing Stone. The Juſtice hearing what had happened, went  
like a

## *The Famous History of Sir Billy of Biliberey*

like his father, as also his Daughter, and the wife of Sir Billy, was executed, and the  
also marvelously glorified. The Court being now the same, a Jury was impanelled, and found  
him guilty of self-Murder, whereupon he should have been hanged in the Highway, with a stone  
driven thorough him, for the honour of Knight's Company, and being the last, and the  
last of that Order, he was buried in the Church-yard of that Parish, accompanied with an extraordinary  
multitude of People, and upon his Tomb were these Verses inscribed.

*Under this Cloud of Clay,  
Lies Billy of Biliberey.*

*He Gyants did subdue,  
And Monsters overthrew,  
Now death our Knight hath slain.*

*Here let him rest in Peace,  
Who living did me cease,  
Fresh travels to increase.*

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**FINIS**

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